



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,809

FRIDAY 1 JANUARY 1999

108273

(3)

£0.64 (IR50p) 45p

IN THIS SECTION

Rusedski wins Wimbledon!

1999 PREDICTIONS, PAGE 14

How panto went mega

ARTS PAGE 7

Fergal Keane's Ireland

REVIEW PAGE 11

IN THE FRIDAY REVIEW

Euro is born as ministers hail move towards political union

By JOHN LICHFIELD in Paris
AND STEPHEN CASTLE AND KATHERINE BUTLER in Brussels

RARELY in the history of the world can power – real power, the power of money – have been given up with so little fuss.

Eleven sovereign nations yesterday handed over control of their currencies to a committee of bankers. The meeting took less than 30 minutes.

Five hundred blue balloons were released into the sky over Brussels. The euro, the world's newest, least visible and second most important currency was born (weighing in at slightly more than a dollar or just over 70 pence). The Eurosceptics – and not just in Britain – said it could never happen; or if it did happen it would cause a European recession, street-fighting or even civil war.

But the euro is coming into being to the polite, overwhelmingly positive but rather distracted welcome of the 300 million citizens of the European Union. (Last night's new year celebrations claimed a much bigger share of most Euro-landers' attention).

The quiet welcome is understandable. For three years, the heavyweight baby with the ugly name will not be allowed to appear in public. The franc, mark, lira and others will remain, nominally, in the pockets and wallets of Euro-landers. The euro will be allowed out on the street only in the form of plastic money and cheques (and even then only if a shop or restaurant is willing to take it).

But, in real terms, the 10 old currencies – two of them, the franc and the florin, with 12 centuries of history between them – died yesterday. They have ceased to exist as independent instruments of national pride or economic policy. They are now mere accounting units of the euro. Their exchange rates



A crowd in front of the European Council building in Brussels preparing to let off balloons yesterday to mark the launch of the euro

against the new currency were yesterday locked until the euro finally sweeps them away in July 2002.

The 11 finance ministers of the euro nations (Britain not being represented) decided, in a ceremony broadcast throughout Europe, that a euro is worth 1.93626 Deutschmarks, 6.55957 French francs and so on. All decisions affecting the new cur-

rency, on interest rates or monetary flows, will be taken by the European Central Bank in Frankfurt.

Yesterday's calm in Euro-land was therefore, in another sense, misleading and perplexing. Something huge was happening but the reaction was an enthusiastic lack of interest. The comments by several Euro-land ministers, foreshadow-

ing a euro-driven movement towards a more federal Europe will (perverse) delight the Eurosceptics and annoy the Blair government. But they are a recognition of reality.

Hailing the formal establishment of the euro, Jacques Santer, the European Commission President, argued: "Europe can speak with a single voice. It is now up to us to

proceed. We embark on the next stage leading to political unity which, I think, is a direct consequence of economic unity, so Europe can play a leading role on the international stage, even including a common defence policy. This goes well beyond the introduction merely of the euro. It heralds a new departure for Europe."

The French Finance Minis-

ter, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, argued that the euro-11 committee of finance ministers will become the "economic government" of Europe, and Italy's Carlo Azeglio Ciampi hailed the currency as a "decisive step towards ever closer political and institutional union in Europe".

And indeed, for all that the Blair government denies it, to have a single European cur-

rency will progressively demand more co-operation on the big economic and political decisions affecting everything from public spending to unemployment and, up to a point, taxes. In turn, this will – or should – demand more direct democratic control of decision-making in Brussels, which would, itself, be a federalising influence: another step towards some form of "European

government", however loosely drawn.

The EEC/EC/EU has always proceeded this way (stealthily if you like, but its aims always made clear). It sets ambitious but abstract economic targets – the common market, the single market, now the single currency. The often unseemly struggle to achieve these targets, and make them stick, forces member states to draw closer and closer together politically.

There are good economic arguments for the euro. It has already sheltered Europe from the worst of the Asian economic flu. The euro countries have minimal inflation and low interest rates (unlike Britain). The OECD predicts that the EU will be the most dynamic region of the world next year.

But the euro was not invented for these reasons alone. It was also invented to answer the threat from German unity by forcing more European economic – and therefore political – unity.

A single European currency will – from 2002 when it becomes holdable and foldable – bring Europe alive to its citizens for the first time. There is potential in the euro for the creation of a truly European political consciousness. But also the potential for disaster. If the Euro-landers start to feel economic pain before "bonding" with the new currency they will inevitably blame the surreal new money in their wallets.

And what should Britain do? We are back where we started. We did not want the common market but once it prospered we had to join. There are perhaps good economic reasons why Britain would never have wished for the euro; but once it exists and succeeds, we are asked a different question. Can you afford to stay out?

Launch of the euro, page 10.
Leading article, Review, page 3

Britain feared Soviets would unleash 20,000 Hiroshimas

A GRIM reminder of the Cold War is revealed today in formerly top-secret Ministry of Defence papers that outline the expected devastation from a Soviet nuclear strike on Britain.

The MoD report from 1967, released under the 30-year rule at the Public Record Office at Kew, estimates that a Soviet thermonuclear attack against Britain would have unleashed a destructive force nearly

BY PAUL LASHMAR AND NICHOLAS SCHOON

20,000 times greater than Hiroshima. It would have flattened much of urban Britain to little more than smouldering wreckage, with millions of casualties. It is the first time that such a candid government estimate of the scale of nuclear war on the British Isles has been released.

The list was compiled by

the forces' Joint Intelligence Committee and approved by the chiefs of staff, Britain's most senior defence committee made up of the chiefs of the Navy, Army and Royal Air Force.

The document, titled *Probable Nuclear Targets in the United Kingdom: Assumptions for Planning*, outlines military estimates of how Britain's cities and defence installations would be razed by a Soviet nuclear air attack. The material is based on

high-level intelligence and contains a table of likely targets, with the size of nuclear bomb expected to be used.

Military top brass thought the Soviets had identified 104 potential targets, including all of Britain's main cities, air bases and naval bases. They estimated more than 360 nuclear weapons would be launched by the Soviets with a total yield of 389 megatons – equivalent to 389 million tons of TNT explo-

sive. The bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the Second World War, by comparison, had yields of just 20,000 tons of TNT.

In an introduction to the report, the Secretary to the Defence Chiefs of Staff, Major General Gibbon, said that even that figure could be an underestimate. "Note has also been taken of comment by the deputy Chief of Staff (Intelli-

gence) that Russian strategic missiles are now assessed to have an operational yield of half to one megaton – although a maximum yield of about three megatons is possible," he said.

London was expected to take the heaviest punishment with a combination of eight one-megaton missiles and two 500 kiloton bombs – 450 times more powerful than Hiroshima. The MoD believed that the Soviets had selected central

and regional government centres, including London and the military commands of the Royal Navy and RAF, some 20 cities from Glasgow to Nottingham, RAF bomber bases and USAF nuclear bomber bases; submarine and naval bases, including Rosyth and Portsmouth.

Defence experts believed the Russians were aiming two nuclear missiles at each target in case one failed, and most were also earmarked for raids

by aircraft carrying atom bombs.

The minutes of a Ministry of Defence meeting that examined the report makes no reference to likely civilian casualties but, had only a quarter of these weapons reached Britain and detonated, at least a sixth of the entire population would have been killed instantly, with millions dying later from radiation sickness, burns and other injuries.

INSIDE THIS SECTION

Labour fury at Lib Dem links
MPs and ministers oppose closer ties with Paddy Ashdown's party
Home P2

Jacqueline du Pré film 'slur'
A biopic of the tragic cellist has reopened old wounds
Home P3

Yemen hostages to return
Survivors of the gun battle will fly home while a diplomatic row rages
Home P5

Bill Clinton censure deal likely
The US President's chances of escaping full impeachment rose
Foreign P9

UK 'already in recession'
A leading economist believes that output fell in the last quarter
Business P11

Arsène Wenger in 'cheat' row
The Arsenal manager accused a Charlton player of feigning injury
Sport P20

INSIDE THE REVIEW

Steve Richards
How the Cabinet rediscovered their confidence post-Mandelson
Comment P3

Philip Hensher
The Honours List: all right for some, but not for writers
Comment P4

Josef Joffe
The view from Europe: why the EMU is a make-or-break affair
Comment P4

Mark Steel
How a long night ended in an Soho drinking den above a minicab firm
Features P6

Death in the hills
I lost both my father and brother on Scottish mountains
Features P6

Edward Elgar's big break
Why the Enigma Variations made his name 100 years ago
Music P9



TODAY'S TELEVISION PAGE 12

HOME NEWS 2-10, FOREIGN NEWS 10-17, BUSINESS 18-19, SPORT 20-26, CRYPTIC CROSSWORD 28, WEATHER 2

LETTERS 2, LEADERS 3, COMMENT 4, OPINIONS 5, FEATURES 6, ARTS 7, MUSIC 8-9, LISTINGS 10, RADIO 11

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IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

'Call a Morris dancer quaint and he'll bounce you on your head'

ANDREW MARTIN ON THE WORLD OF MEN, BELLS AND BEER

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH MCRAE, MARK STEEL, ROBERT TISK, TERENCE BLACKER
JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID VARONOVITCH, ANNE McILROY, THOMAS SCUTCHELLE, MILES KINGTON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH

■ IN THE WEEKEND
REVIEW: TRAVEL,
GARDENING, BOOKS,
MOTORING, SHOPPING
AND PROPERTY
■ PLUS YOUR MONEY

Leukaemia 'may run in families'

A SUSCEPTIBILITY to blood cancer could run in families, scientists revealed yesterday. Researchers have pinpointed a gene, known as ATM, thought to be responsible for some cases of the most common type of leukaemia. It is the first evidence of a hereditary link to the disease.

The findings from scientists at Birmingham University, published in *The Lancet* yesterday, show that almost 20 per cent of sufferers of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL) could have a mutated version of the gene. Of these, one in three may have inherited the fault.

Professor Malcolm Taylor, the chief researcher, said: "We've suspected for some time that a number of patients with this type of leukaemia could be carriers of a faulty gene. But the fact that we have been able to isolate the specific gene and show that it could run in families is a major step forward."

"This means that we can start looking for new ways to repair the defective gene and ultimately prevent this type of blood cancer developing."

CLL, which affects people over 50 in 90 per cent of cases,

BY JOHN VON RADOWITZ

is not immediately life-threatening and can be effectively controlled by drugs. Its main danger is in weakening patients' immune systems and leaving them open to infection.

However, Prof Taylor and his team think problems with the ATM gene could also be responsible for a more aggressive form of leukaemia.

The ATM gene is thought to be involved in apoptosis, the self-destruct mechanism by which damaged cells commit suicide before they have a chance to grow into a potentially fatal tumour. If the gene is "switched off" it cannot instruct cells to die, so they are able to continue multiplying out of control. The team found that in 40 per cent of tissue samples taken from sufferers of CLL, the ATM gene was either impaired or not working.

Professor Gordon McVie, director-general of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "These findings are extremely exciting because they are taking us yet another step closer to finding out what causes cancer."



Blair aide Philip Gould is under fire for backing a Lib-Lab pact. Tony Buckingham

Labour anger over Lib Dem links grows

TONY BLAIR faced a growing rebellion over plans to forge closer links with the Liberal Democrats yesterday as Labour activists joined cabinet heavyweights to oppose his strategy.

Opponents of Mr Blair on the left and right of the Labour Party claimed the "tide was turning" against him over Lib-Lab links following the resignation of Peter Mandelson, who was the Cabinet's strongest supporter of closer ties with Paddy Ashdown's party.

It emerged that the new alliance between John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, aimed at reasserting "traditional Labour values", will extend to opposing Mr Blair's moves to bring Labour and the Lib-Dems closer.

In a further setback to Mr Blair, he came under pressure to sack a close adviser who called for an eventual Lib-Lab merger. Philip Gould, his pol-

BY ANDREW GRUCE
Political Editor

ster and strategist and a close ally of Mr Mandelson, called for the two parties to join forces in an interview with *The Independent* in October.

Labour First, a 600-strong group of moderate Labour activists normally loyal to Mr Blair, said it was "outraged" by Mr Gould's "almost treacherous" behaviour.

"By what right does this self-appointed, self-opinionated wretch try to start a major row in the party?" the group asks in its latest newsletter. "Mr Gould should be thrown in the dustbin of history as a genuine enemy of the party."

Although Mr Blair will not distance himself from Mr Gould, his allies are worried that the new alliance between Mr Prescott and Mr Brown will make it harder to extend co-operation with the Lib Dems.

"They have seized their opportunity," one Blair ally admitted last night. "There is no doubt the balance of power in the Cabinet has changed. It is highly significant for our relations with the Lib Dems."

One minister said Mr Brown had been "driven to distraction" by "silly criticism" of his economic policy by Malcolm Bruce, the Lib Dems' Treasury spokesman. "Like Mr Prescott, the Chancellor opposes the introduction of pro-

portional representation for House of Commons elections.

The minister said opposition to closer ties was not a "left-right" issue, with many newly-elected Blairite MPs hostile to the Lib Dems because they now formed the opposition to Labour at local level.

The growing revolt will make it harder for Mr Blair to extend the work of a cabinet committee that includes senior Lib Dems from constitutional reform to other policy areas.

Some ministers are furious that the Lib Dems are demanding access to confidential cabinet papers, saying this would give them more information than Labour ministers and MPs.

In a BBC Radio interview yesterday, Mr Prescott insisted he was "fully on board" with Mr Blair's strategy but stopped short of endorsing his plans to widen the cabinet committee's brief. "Let us see if we can get co-operation," he said.

The Deputy Prime Minister praised Mr Blair's "vision and courage" and insisted his modernising Government was in tune with Labour's traditional values.

Referring to his interview in *The Independent* this week which revealed his new partnership with Mr Brown, he said: "I wanted to nail the lie that there was a feud between Gordon Brown and John Prescott."

Decision soon on M25 Three

A DECISION is expected "within weeks" on whether controversial convictions in the cases of the so-called "M25 Three" are referred back to the Court of Appeal.

The men were jailed for life in 1990 for what was described as an "orgy of violence" in towns and villages around the London orbital road, which left one man dead.

They have been supported by a vigorous campaign group which has complained bitterly at the length of time they have been waiting for a decision on the case from the Criminal Cases Review Commission. Now the body set up to investigate miscarriages of justice has indicated that a ruling on whether to put the case before the Court of Appeal is likely early this month.

The decision will come nearly nine years after the three - Raphael Rowe, Michael Davis and Randolph Johnson - were sentenced for a series of attacks carried out in one night in December 1988. The men, from Sydenham, south London, were convicted of the murder, in Warrington, Surrey, of Peter Hurburgh who, with his homo-

BY GARY FINN

sexual lover was dragged from his car at gunpoint, tied up, beaten and doused with petrol. The assault led Mr Hurburgh to have a fatal heart attack.

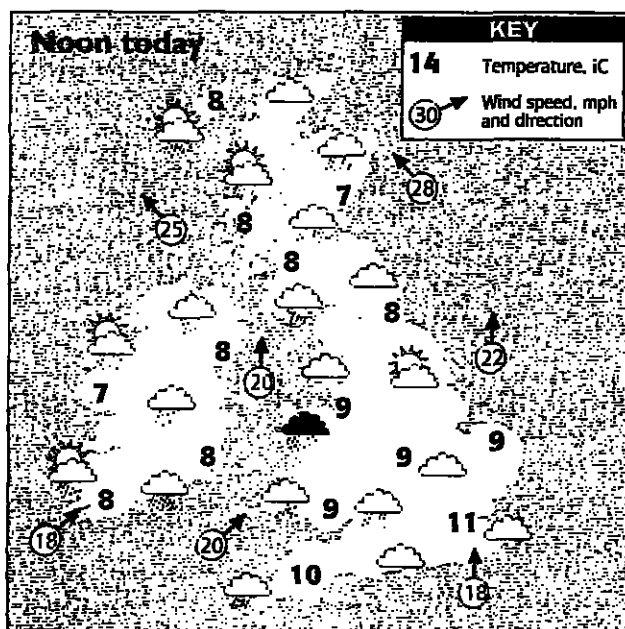
Later, on the same night, men broke into the home of a retired businessman in Oxford and stabbed his 40-year-old son. The next attack took place in a house in Fitcham, where a couple were tied up as their home was ransacked.

The violent nature of the robberies shocked police and local residents and a £25,000 reward was offered for information on the gang.

The description of the perpetrators, given by victims and issued by the police to the public, was of a gang of two white men and a black man. One victim described one of the gang as being fair-haired and blue-eyed. However, the three men convicted were all black. They were convicted largely on the evidence of three accomplices who did not face any charges in connection with the crime.

The Criminal Cases Review Commission announced it was reviewing the cases in 1997.

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation An unsettled start to the New Year. There will be a lot of cloud across the whole of the UK today. South-west England, Wales and north-west England will have outbreaks of rain, including some heavier bursts on coasts and hills. Rain in Northern Ireland will spread into western Scotland, but the far north-west may see a few sunny spells. Eastern Scotland will be mostly cloudy and drizzly. Eastern England will also have a good deal of cloud, but it will be quite mild.

London, East of London, E Anglia, E & NE England Dull and cloudy with a small risk of drizzle, but mild. A moderate southerly wind. Max temp 10-12°C (50-54°F).

Midlands, Cent & NW England: Rather cloudy, but mild and mostly dry. A moderate southerly wind. Max temp 9-10°C (48-50°F).

Channel Is, SW & NW England, Wales, Lake District, Isle of Man: Dull and cloudy with rain moving in. A fresh south-westerly wind. Max 8-11°C (46-52°F).

NE & SE Scotland, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, N Wales: Generally dull and cloudy with patches of light rain and drizzle, but mild. A fresh to strong south-easterly wind. Max temp 7-9°C (45-48°F).

NW Scotland: Some early sun, but become increasingly cloudy, the cloud thickening to produce rain this afternoon. A strong south-easterly wind. Max temp 7-9°C (45-48°F).

SW Scotland, Glasgow, W Isles: Mostly cloudy with showers becoming prolonged this afternoon when some heavier bursts are possible. A fresh south-easterly wind. Max temp 8-9°C (46-48°F).

N Ireland: Early rain in the north, becoming brighter and more showery before rain moves in tonight. A fresh south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-10°C (45-50°F).

OUTLOOK

Overnight rain will clear to leave tomorrow breezy with sunny spells and showers. Most frequent in the north and west. It will be breezy but generally mild. Further rain will spread east on Sunday, but it will become even milder.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Leytonstone. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 31st December 1998. Canterbury: A10 between Foston and M11. Resurfacing and bridge maintenance work at Shepperton. Until 14th February. Buckinghamshire: M40 between junctions 16 (A525) & 5 (Hyemans East). Three narrow lanes both ways and a 50 mph speed limit in force. Until 1st January. Bristol: M5 J16-18. Major Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2001. Northamptonshire: A49 between Lisk A472 and M4 J24. Roadworks. Until 11th January.

LIGHTING UP

	4.08pm	to	8.46am
Belfast	4.04pm	to	8.18am
Birmingham	4.12pm	to	8.16am
Bristol	3.53pm	to	8.47am
London	4.02pm	to	8.06am
Manchester	4.00pm	to	8.25am
Newcastle	3.48pm	to	8.31am

HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Avonmouth	6.10	13.0	6.40	13.2
Cork	4.29	4.5	4.55	4.5
Devonport	4.42	5.4	5.12	5.3
Dover	9.58	6.6	10.30	6.7
Dun Laoghaire	10.41	4.3	10.59	4.3
Falmouth	4.13	5.2	4.43	5.1
Gosport	11.33	3.5	-	-
Harwich	10.51	4.0	11.22	4.0
Holyhead	9.24	5.7	9.46	5.7
Hull (Albert Dock)	5.11	8.6	5.42	8.6
King Lynn	5.12	6.6	5.38	6.7
Lahy	1.19	5.6	1.48	5.6
Liverpool	10.18	9.4	10.42	9.5
Millford Haven	5.14	6.9	5.40	6.9
Newquay	4.07	6.9	4.32	7.0
Portsmouth	5.37	2.1	6.10	2.0
Portsmouth	10.24	4.8	10.50	4.7
Purcell	7.11	4.9	7.35	5.0
Scarborough	2.55	5.8	3.23	5.8
Wick	10.26	3.6	10.49	3.6

Height measured in metres

AIR QUALITY

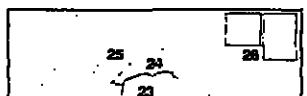
	NO _x	SO ₂
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
E England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises:	08.06
Sun sets:	16.02
Moon rises:	09.41
Moon sets:	19.43
Fall moon:	Tomorrow

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecast dial 0800 5009 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).



YESTERDAY

	Winnipeg	Thunder	Thunder	Thunder
Bournemouth, Dorset	11C	(52F)		
Coldest (day):	Glasgow, Argyll	7C	(45F)	
For 24hrs to 2pm Thursday				
San	Rain	In	Max	Min
hrs			°C	°F

EXTREMES

Aberdeen	1.3	0.35	9	48
Anglesey	1.8	0.11	9	48
Ardenmore	0	0.17	9	48
Belfast	4.7	0.30	7	45
Birmingham	1.8	0	10	50
Bournemouth	0.8	0.01	12	54
Bristol	0	0	11	52
Buxton	0.1	0.01	9	48
Cardiff	0	0.04	11	52
Claughton	0	0	8	46
Cromer	0	0	11	52
Edinburgh	1.0	0.06	10	50
Exmouth	0.1	0.05	10	50
Fishguard	1.4	0.28	9	48
Folkestone	0	0.12	10	50
Glasgow	0.9	0.12	10	50
Hastings	0	0.05	10	50
Hove	n/a			
Isle of Man	4.1	0.07	10	50
Jersey	0	0.01	11	52
Isle of Wight	0	0.01	11	52
Kendal	2.1	0.04	9	48
Leeds	3.5	0	11	52
Lewes	0	0.14	9	48
Lichfield	0	0.01	11	52
Liverpool	0	0	10	50
Lowestoft	0	0	10	50
Manchester	1.7	0	11	52
Margate	0	0.01	11	52
Morcambe	0	0.04	11	52
Newcastle	3.7	0.01	10	50
Newquay	n/a			
Norwich	0	0	11	52
Oxford	2.8	0	12	54
Ross-on-Wye	0	0.01	10	50
Salisbury	n/a			
Scarborough	1.2	0	11	52
Shrewsbury	0.2	0.01	10	50
Southend	n/a			
Southport	0	0.01	10	50
Sourthmore	1.5	0.35	10	50
Sussex	0.1	0.01	12	54
Torquay	1.8	0.08	10	50
Torquay	0	0.11	13	55
Walsingham	n/a			
Weymouth	0	0.01	11	52

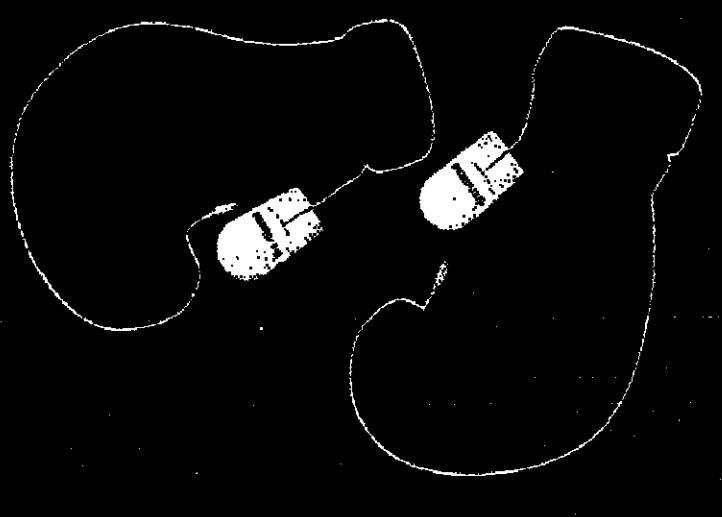
24 hours to 6pm (GMT) Wednesday

Information by PA WeatherCentre

RAIN OR SHINE...

MORE THAN two million people in Tanzania will face "severe food shortages" this year as part of the legacy of damage caused by el Niño in 1998. Tanzania was not only battered by severe storms in January, it was left facing a drought in the rainy season of October to December. The central bank said the effect of poor harvests had been made worse by pests, poor storage and food smuggling to neighbouring countries.

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Music world in discord as film depicts du Pré the icon as selfish seductress



Jacqueline du Pré, the 'Genius in the Family', flanked by siblings Hilary and Piers

JACQUELINE DU PRÉ, the brilliant cellist who died of multiple sclerosis in 1987, is once again to become the centre of controversy. A film based on last year's unsettling biography of her by her sister and brother is due to open in London in three weeks' time.

The film, *Hilary and Jackie*, will, like the siblings' biography *A Genius in the Family*, show family discord and du Pré seducing her brother-in-law.

In the movie Jacqueline makes plain that she wants Hilary's husband Christopher "Kiffer" Finzi in her bed. "I feel a million dollars this morning, that was exactly what the doctor ordered," she beams after Kiffer - played by David Morrissey - reluctantly obliges his demanding sister-in-law.

The film stars the Oscar-nominated actress Emily Watson as Jacqueline and is likely to reopen wounds between du Pré's family and friends. This time, though, the argument will be very public.

Next week Julian Lloyd Webber, the cellist and friend of du Pré, will denounce Jacqueline's siblings Hilary and Piers as driven by spite, and the film "a slur on Jackie's memory".

Jacqueline du Pré, with her flowing blond hair, good looks and vulnerability, was the golden girl of classical music in the sixties. Her recording of Elgar's Cello Concerto was widely praised and remains a touchstone for other versions. At 28 she was diagnosed as having multiple sclerosis and stopped playing in public. When she died, at the age of 42, she became an icon in the classical music world and beyond. But in the book and film her sister HI-

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

lary, a gifted flautist (and originally thought to be the musical prodigy in the family), is shown as jealous and angry at being eclipsed by her sister's fame.

In turn, she paints Jackie as spoilt and manipulative, raging at those who care for her, and emotionally dangerous with overt designs on Christopher.

With the film certain to reach a much wider audience than the book, one of du Pré's most celebrated friends and admirers is about to break his silence on the controversy.

In the February issue of *Classic FM Magazine*, which goes on sale next week, Julian Lloyd Webber says: "She was the cellist I saw the most as a student. She left an impression of a radiant being who loved playing. This does not come over in Hilary and Piers's account. My main impression... is that there's a spiteful streak in both Hilary and Piers, and these revelations are their ultimate act of spite and bitterness. It leaves me with a very unpleasant taste."

He adds: "People have to make their own way in life. I have a sibling who has been extremely successful, and I wouldn't entertain doing a book of this kind."

However, the classical music broadcaster Henry Kelly defends the film, which he has seen and describes as "very moving." He adds: "Jacqueline du Pré may have been selfish, rapacious with her selfish husband and a control freak who exploited her own perceived vulnerability."

"It makes her no less an artist... At a time when her career should have been blossoming her health deteriorated, her husband Daniel Barenboim found a new love and life, and fathered a child."

"Jacqueline's world gradually fell apart. What unimaginable sadness this must have created within her."

Barenboim, du Pré's former husband, is refusing to comment. But Andrew Stewart of *Classic FM Magazine* has spoken to friends of the Israeli conductor, and those friends claim Barenboim is upset by both the book and the forthcoming film. There is even speculation that Barenboim might call on the French courts and France's tough privacy laws to halt its distribution across the Channel.

Carol Easton, a former du Pré biographer, suggested in her 1989 biography of the cellist that Jacqueline's relatives declined to support her as multiple sclerosis crippled her.

Hilary du Pré claims there was a reconciliation with her sister. But, as she slipped into her final coma, Jacqueline du Pré chose to be surrounded by her friends, not by her siblings.

Brother and sister stand to make money from the movie adaptation, which is directed by Armand Tucker and, with Emily Watson, stars James Frain as Hilary, Charles Dance as their father and Celia Imrie as their mother.

Hilary and Jackie has a gala charity premiere at the Barbican Centre on 20 January. One critic who has seen a preview of the film says Emily Watson portrays du Pré with sensuality when she plays the



The Oscar-nominated actress Emily Watson portraying Jacqueline du Pré in the film 'Hilary and Jackie'

cello, and is heartbreaking as her health fatally declines, while James Frain plays Barenboim as "a study in arrogance and bewilderment". *Hilary and Jackie* marks the big-screen debut of Armand Tucker, a documentary maker. He says the film is even-hand-

ed. "Hilary and Piers' story honestly moved me to the centre of my being."

"I had no idea of the price Jackie paid for her talent nor of the sacrifice that lay at the heart of Hilary's life."

"It touched something very deep in me... Jackie's music

has everything: love, hate, sadness, beauty, wonder. I think you belittle her and her music by trying to canonise her by telling a lie about who she really was."

While *Hilary and Jackie* will cause pain to du Pré's friends, there is by contrast an amusing history to its title. It

was originally going to be simply called *Jackie*. But American distributors foresaw confusion with Jackie Kennedy.

Now some fear that American audiences might believe they are going to see a film making comparisons between a first lady past and present.

FACTS, FICTION AND FEUDS

Margaret Helfgott, the sister of the pianist David Helfgott immortalised in the film *Shine* derided the biopic (below) as an "unforgivable distortion" of her brother's life. In her book *Out of Tune*, Ms Helfgott claims that David's illness was not caused by his supposedly



abusive father, but was a form of schizophrenia.

Novelist and film-maker Hanif Kureishi was challenged publicly by his sister for his portrayal of his father in the novel *The Buddha of Suburbia*, and the resulting television series (below). Yasmin Kureishi wrote to *The Guardian* contradicting many of her brother's claims about his childhood. She wrote: "Does being



famous mean you can rewrite history for even more personal gain?"

The makers of *Titanic* incensed an entire Scottish community with their portrayal of William Murdoch. The liner's First Officer was seen shooting a passenger who tried to fight his way into a lifeboat and then turning his gun on himself. Alasdair Morgan, the SNP MP for Galloway and Upper Nithsdale, tabled a Parliamentary motion calling for an apology and Scott Neeson, vice-president of 20th Century Fox, went to Dalbeattie, near Dumfries to placate Murdoch's relatives.

SOON Three SkyDigital takes the lead in race for customers

RUPERT MURDOCH'S SkyDigital has won the opening skirmishes in the long fight to become Britain's dominant digital broadcaster, picking up four times as many users as its rival ONdigital.

According to the latest figures, more than 250,000 British homes are now receiving a digital signal. The satellite broadcaster SkyDigital, which launched on 1 October, says it has hit its year-end target of 200,000 subscribers.

Its terrestrial counterpart,

BY RHYNS WILLIAMS

ONdigital, is refusing to discuss figures in public. The company, a joint venture between Carlton and Granada, will say only that hundreds of thousands will be watching by the end of 1999. However, *The Independent* has learnt that, five weeks after transmission began, as many as 50,000 homes had bought the service, a figure said to be in line with expectations.

SkyDigital launched six weeks before ONdigital. Of the

100,400 customers Sky signed up in its first month, 70,000 or so were existing satellite subscribers trading up to digital. "The big challenge, not just for us, is to get the multi-channel virgin," said SkyDigital.

Over its first three months, Sky has probably seduced about 60,000 multi-channel virgins, a figure that makes ONdigital's 50,000 new users - gained despite hardware supply problems and variable signal reception - look highly respectable.

All you need to watch digital terrestrial television is your existing aerial and television set, with £199 for a set-top box to decode the signal. The shortage of boxes caused ONdigital initial problems. At the launch weekend, shops held 5,000 boxes compared with 75,000 inquiries. "We suffered as new technologies often do," said ONdigital. "That has now been addressed."

The other factor inhibiting ONdigital is that nearly a third of households are in areas un-

able to pick up the signal. That will fall to about 10 per cent by the end of this year. SkyDigital, however, is available across the whole country to anyone with a satellite dish and the appropriate decoder.

Both platforms offer free to air channels such as BBCs 1, 2, Choice and News 24, and Channels 4 and 5. These are topped up with nearly 200 subscription channels on SkyDigital and about 20 on ONdigital. ITV and ITV2, which commanded an audience of 730 for its Trevor

McDonald interview with Sarah Ferguson, are exclusive to the terrestrial platform.

Marco Rimini, director of development and strategy at the advertising agency J Walter Thompson, believes there is little else beyond their big budget promotional campaigns that either supplier could be doing to sell the service at the moment. SkyDigital is expected to spend £50m on marketing before the end of 1999. ONdigital £90m.

"In the short term, the only

big difference will come when someone gets some killer programming on air, like football or films," Mr Rimini said. ONdigital has set aside £20m to buy in the sort of must-see, event programming that did so much to drive dish sales for Sky. It has, for example, secured Mike Tyson's return to competitive boxing this month for £2m.

Mr Rimini said he expected a new generation of television sets to include the digital decoder box as standard. Broadcasters could accelerate the

government decision to switch off the old analogue signal by heavily subsidising the set-top boxes or giving them away.

The only question left is which of digital's three platforms - cable, satellite and terrestrial - will lead the market. One City media analyst said: "There probably is room in the market for multiple platforms. Cable operators are enjoying reasonable success now and they come on stream this year, while part of the market will never want a dish on the roof."

On New Year's Day, talk as long as you like for no more than 50p.

On New Year's Day with BT you can phone whoever you like in the UK, for as long as you like, and you'll never pay more than 50p for the call. That's right - local and long distance calls. So, go on, pick up the phone and ring in January 1, 1999 in style. This offer is just one more reason for being with BT.



Millions greet final year of millennium

MILLIONS OF revellers took to the streets last night as Britain celebrated the beginning of the final year of the Millennium.

Edinburgh saw up to 180,000 party-goers from around the world arriving to join the UK's biggest street party as the Scots celebrated Hogmanay.

In London, 100,000 people converged on Trafalgar Square to see in the New Year to the chimes of Big Ben.

Revellers everywhere had to wait a little longer to celebrate the arrival of 1999 - scientists have ruled that the last minute of 1998 should be 61 seconds long to allow the rotation of the Earth to catch up with today's super-accurate atomic clocks.

Shoppers having stocked up massively for the Christmas period, surged to retail centres again yesterday to make last minute purchases. But few people seemed inclined to cook with large numbers of the cap-

By SARAH WILSON

ital's restaurants fully booked. At Sir Terence Conran's restaurant, Mezzo, which seats nearly 500 all the tables were booked twice. Diners who arrived at 7pm had to give up their tables by 9:15, although they were allowed to continue their evening at the bar.

The well-organised booked taxis well in advance, realising that most city centres would be snarled up well into the early hours. And firms were each reporting several hundred bookings in advance.

In Edinburgh, the former GPO building on Princes Street was turned into a massive warehouse party. The street party and concert in the Gardens lasted until 1.30am, with free buses taking revellers home.

Revellers in Northern Ireland were also taking to the streets at press time. In Belfast, what

is expected to be the city's biggest street party featured two open air concerts by the Saw Doctors and Downpatrick band Ash, a firework display and a funfair.

More than 10,000 people were expected and council chiefs said it would be a dry run for the Millennium celebrations. "In the future we would like Belfast to be even better than Edinburgh at New Year," said a city council spokesman.

As the nation wakes up to a collective hangover it should be well equipped to cope: sales of headache cures soared last year with the total bill for over-the-counter painkillers coming to £267m.

Cardiff plans to stretch New Year over three days, as a pilot project for the Millennium celebrations. Last night it laid on a funfair, a lantern procession, New Year resolution trees, live bands and a fireworks display. Council leader Russell Good-

way said: "Cardiff is gearing up to mark the Millennium with a family celebratory event we can all participate in and be proud of."

London has assembled more than 10,000 performers for the capital's 13th New Year's Day parade. Some 800,000 spectators lined the streets last year to watch the three-hour jamboree. Organisers predict there could be more than one million today if the weather is good. Bob Bone, the director of the parade, said it would be "the biggest street entertainment to take place anywhere at any time the of year".

"We are serving up a feast of family entertainment and the interest from around the world this year has been immense." New York's Thanksgiving Parade, organised by Macy's department store, is the London spectacle's nearest rival and featured 5,000 performers last November.



Foreigners and local Chinese join together at midnight to welcome the first day of 1999 in Hong Kong

EPA

Last year thousands of people gave up the same thing for the new year.

"Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year to you."

Most people will rip open their

cards and this message will drift across their minds without causing a ripple of worry. To others, facing the new year is like standing in the path of a thundering tidal wave of problems.

A stressful Christmas period can be the straw that breaks the camels back, where everyone seems happy except you. Or it can be a time of reflection, the calm before the storm.

Having only just survived the last year some feel drained of the will or energy to do battle with another year.

So while others are joining gyms,

giving up beer and fags,

many decide simply to

give up.

One person in Britain dies by suicide about every 90 minutes, 75% are men.

Every 7 seconds someone contacts The Samaritans, and every year they receive over 1.5 million silent calls.

The Samaritans know from 45 years of experience that just talking to someone who will really listen, can make the difference between someone choosing life rather than suicide.

The Samaritans don't aim to solve people's problems. Often the reason someone's in such distress is because

their problem doesn't have a "solution".

But by talking through a problem people

begin to discover options they may not

have realised existed. Many people think

of suicide because they need the problem

to go away that instant, but they don't

want to be dead forever.

The Samaritans will not judge or preach, or tell you what to do, but neither

will they play down the seriousness of your situation, and it almost goes without

saying that anything you say is in absolute confidence.

So this New Year, whatever you're going through, we'll go through it with you.

Whatever you're going through we'll go through it with you. The Samaritans. 0345 90 90 90.

Photography Adam Hinton.

The Samaritans relies on donations.

Car of missing family found abandoned



Jade (left) Hannah (right), missing for three months

AN ABANDONED car belonging to a couple who vanished with their foster children more than four months ago has been found.

The first breakthrough in the investigation into the disappearance of Jade and Hannah Bennett and their foster parents, Jeff and Jenny Bramley, came on Wednesday in York when a man reported the car, which may have been there for up to five weeks, to police.

Cambridgeshire police, who have been leading the inquiry, said coats belonging to Jade, five, and Hannah, three, and documents relating to them, were found in the car.

Mr and Mrs Bramley disappeared from their home in Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, on 14 September with the two girls they had hoped to adopt. They had been due to meet Cambridgeshire County Council social service officials, who planned to take the children back from the couple because they were unable to provide the "special home" the girls needed. Their natural mother put Jade and Hannah into care because she was unable to look after them.

A nationwide search and televised appeal for information turned up few leads on the

BY CATHY COMERFORD

family. The couple are thought to have drawn a large sum of money from their bank account before vanishing.

Police were yesterday appealing for people near the city's railway station for any information about the car or sightings of the family. The area has a mixture of bed and breakfast and residential accommodation nearby and it is believed the family could still be in York.

Detective Sergeant Mark Nicholson said: "We will now be closely examining the vehicle and hope its recovery will give us further clues as to where this family are now."

He said the car, reported to police at lunchtime on Wednesday, had four new tyres and it was suspected that a garage in the York area had worked on it recently. Officers were also checking whether the family were caught on closed-circuit television cameras.

Last month a High Court judge appealed for public help in tracing the family. Mrs Justice Hogg said she was concerned for the safety of the girls and worried that their health and education needs were not being met.

IN BRIEF

Firms urged to reveal green policy

JONATHAN PORRITT wants the Government to force firms to remove the secrecy surrounding their green credentials. The former leader of Friends of the Earth said firms should be bound by law to describe their environmental policies and say which board members were responsible for green issues in their annual reports.

Ahern hails 'wonderful year'

THE PRIME Minister of Ireland, Bertie Ahern, looked back last night on "a wonderful year" for his country. In a New Year message, he highlighted the breakthrough of the Good Friday Agreement. "But it has also been a year of great sadness and tragedy with the horror of the Omagh bombing shattering so many family lives," he said.

Potholer dies trapped in rocks

RESCUERS RECOVERED the body of a 45-year-old potholer from Gwent yesterday who died trapped 50ft underground in a south Wales. The operation took caving volunteers and police divers 17 hours to complete, in difficult conditions. Peter Fowler was found dead, wedged in rocks, in a cave complex near Merthyr Tydfil.

Pill to regulate drug dosage

SCIENTISTS HAVE developed a genetic "dimmer switch" that enables the body to vary the amount of a therapeutic drug circulating in the bloodstream. The switch can be turned up or down by swallowing a pill to tell the body to make more or less of the genetically engineered medicine.

Thumbs down for novelty ties

MEN WHO wear Mickey Mouse or Wallace and Gromit ties are seen as "immature", according to a survey of 300 businessmen. The poll said women found a bad tie the most irritating factor of their male colleagues' appearance.

سبحان من الاله

We need big ideas now, say Tories

A NEW right-wing think-tank may be set up to help the Conservative Party carve out a much-needed policy agenda to boost its prospects of regaining power.

William Hague is said to be "pretty fed up" with existing right-wing groups, such as the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) and the Adam Smith Institute, which he feels have been slow to produce fresh policy ideas.





"The Tory party is intellectually dead," one senior party figure told *The Independent*. "There is little or no new thinking going on. Better presentation, new colours and logos are important, but the party's appeal must be based on substance, not style."

Senior Tories are understood to have held preliminary talks about setting up a think-tank, and discussed how such a body could be funded.

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

Supporters of the plan recall that groups such as the CPS, founded by Sir Keith Joseph and Margaret Thatcher in 1974, became the "engine room" of the Thatcher revolution by defining the free-market agenda she introduced after the 1979 election. Privately, some Tories believe the right-wing think-tanks have been outflanked by groups close to New Labour, such as the Demos organisation, which paved the way for the Government's "rebranding of Britain".

Mr Hague showed his determination to inject some fresh thinking into his party yesterday when he promised that outside experts would play a big role in a wholesale policy review to be carried out during the next nine months.

THINK-TANKS THAT HAVE NURTURED SOME OF THE CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP'S BEST - AND WORST - POLICIES					
The Social Market Foundation	The Adam Smith Institute	Centre for Policy Studies	Social Affairs Unit	Politica	Institute of Economic Affairs
					
Founded 1989 by supporters of SDP's David Owen; with David Sainsbury's cash; Danny Finkelstein (above); now Tory policy chief; Baron Skidelsky head it.	Founded 1977 by Dr Madsen Pirie (above) and Eamonn Butler, who still run it.	Founded In 1974 by Margaret Thatcher (above) and Sir Keith Joseph.	Founded In 1980 by Dr Digby Anderson, as an offshoot of the Institute of Economic Affairs.	Founded In 1995 by Dr Sheila Lawlor (above), previously deputy director of the Centre for Policy Studies.	Founded In 1957 by Arthur Seldon and Ralph Harris (above); now Lord Harris of High Cross.
Aims Advocate the merits of a social market economy.	Aims To promote free-market thinking.	Aims To convert the Conservative Party to free-market ideas.	Aims To provide the social equivalent of its parent's free-market thinking.	Aims Strong right-wing moralist agenda; desire for a smaller state.	Aims To expound the ideas of free-market economics.
Achievements Has influenced welfare and education debate. Lured David Willetts MP away from the Centre for Policy Studies.	Achievements Before it was fashionable, advocated privatisation. Influenced Thatcher and Major governments; has since praised Tony Blair.	Achievements Ideas 'engine room' that drove Thatcher from '79. Claims credit for privatisation, trade union reform. Ran out of steam.	Achievements Has kept close watch on development of a "nanny state"; forced Tony Blair to warn ministers not to create one.	Achievements Influenced Conservative education policy. Critics say it has made little impact, especially since 1997 election.	Achievements Challenged conventional 60s, 70s economic ideas. Had profound influence on monetarist thinking in Thatcher governments.
Barmiest ideas Tots up cost of demands for extra state cash for almost everything made by people on <i>RA's Today</i> .	Barmiest ideas So opposed to state interference it produced a guide to regulations for posing nude.	Barmiest ideas Joseph, in CPS-crafted '74 speech, split Tories, saying jobs should go up to control inflation.	Barmiest ideas 1996 guide for parents wanting to prevent their children getting a "trendy lefty" education.	Barmiest ideas Says state should fund education, but not both with curriculum or pupil assessment.	Barmiest ideas Lord Harris was spotted smoking on a train to support those outraged by no-smoking policy.
Off the planet rating ★	Off the planet rating ★★★★	Off the planet rating ★★	Off the planet rating ★★★★★	Off the planet rating ★★★	Off the planet rating ★★★★

In his New Year message to Tory constituency chairmen, Mr Hague put the search for new policies at the top of his agenda, calling for 1999 to be a "year of ideas". He announced that he would soon be asking his Shadow Cabinet to set up

new policy groups on a wide range of issues. Mr Hague warned his party that it could not rely on mistakes by Labour and the Liberal Democrats to propel it back to power. "We need to develop a fresh, positive and compassionate Conserva-

tive agenda for the next century. That means a thorough overhaul of all our policies." He said: "Each time our great party has been in opposition, we have turned misfortune to our advantage and developed the new thinking

that has taken a new generation of Conservatives back into government. Now it falls to us to begin that process again."

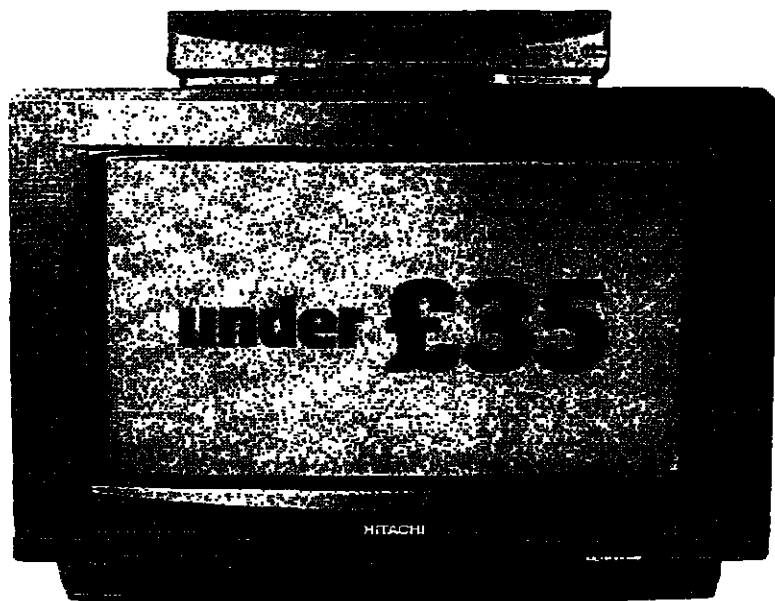
The MPs, Tory activists and independent experts who will serve on the policy groups will analyse the results of the "Listening to Britain" consultation exercise launched after the catastrophic 1997 election.

They will then identify problems, commission research and draw up policy papers, before the party publishes an "Agenda for Britain" document later this year. Last month Mr Hague strengthened the Tories' policy-making machinery by moving Daniel Finkelstein from his current post as director of the Conservative Research Department to head a new policy unit.

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Strokes in women linked to migraine

YOUNG WOMEN with a history of migraine are at higher risk of suffering a stroke during their child-bearing years, especially if they smoke and take the contraceptive pill, according to an international study.

Overall, the risk of a stroke is 78 per cent higher in women who have migraines. The chances of an ischaemic stroke - one caused by a blockage of a blood vessel in the brain - are three and a half times higher in women who have migraines; and if they use a high-dose contraceptive pill and smoke, it is over 34 times higher. There was also an increased risk in women with high blood pressure.

Stroke is relatively uncommon in women under 45, but scientists from Imperial College School of Medicine and the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford say the size of the increased risk is "worrisome". The risks

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

of a haemorrhage stroke, one caused by a burst blood vessel in the brain, were unaffected by a history of migraine.

Dr Linnam Chang, of the cardiovascular studies unit at Imperial College, who led the research published in the *British Medical Journal*, wrote: "The data presented here suggest that women who have migraine should be advised strongly not to smoke and that their blood pressure should be carefully monitored and controlled."

The study, conducted in five European countries, examined 291 women aged 20 to 44 who had suffered a stroke. One-quarter had a history of migraine and a further quarter had a family history of the condition, a factor that also increased the risk of a stroke,

although they were not personally affected.

The researchers found that up to 40 per cent of the strokes developed from a migraine attack. More than two-thirds of women with a history of migraine said they had had a headache in the three days before the stroke, compared with one-quarter of those with no history of migraine. However, in some, the headache stopped before the symptoms of ischaemic stroke appeared.

Smoking and the contraceptive pill are both known to increase the risk of blood clots forming which, if they become lodged in the small arteries supplying blood to the brain, can cause a stroke. For women taking the contraceptive pill, a change in the type or frequency of migraine associated with it appeared to make no difference to the risk.

Schools face millennium bug meltdown, says union

SCHOOLS FACE chaos because local authorities have failed to check systems for the millennium bug, a survey published today suggests.

Teachers could go unpaid, pupils' records lost and school budgets frozen because of council computer breakdown, the National Union of Teachers warns.

A snapshot survey of 16 local authorities found only seven had tested to ensure that school computer systems would operate in 2000. Another five could give no assurances that their central computers would work.

Local government leaders

BY BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

dismissed the claims, however, saying that Audit Commission surveys had found that councils were making progress towards solving likely problems.

Schools are heavily reliant on computers to manage their budgets and affairs and increasingly use sophisticated systems to monitor results and even keep track of registers and attendance at each class.

Doug McAvoy, NUT general secretary, warned that vandals and thieves could have an open day in up to a third of schools

because security systems are linked to local authority computers. "Too often local authorities said they were planning to or considering the possibility of doing something, but not a lot," he said. "With just one year to go to the year 2000, planning... should be over and have been replaced by action."

A spokesman for the Local Government Association said that year 2000 problems were concentrated in small councils. Local education authorities were making good progress, he said, but schools also had a responsibility to make sure their systems were protected.

Notice to existing Barclays mortgage customers

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Public Records 1968: As unrest swept Europe, Tony Benn confronted CND and Harold Wilson put troops on stand-by

'Danny the Red' targeted Wilson

HAROLD WILSON'S government became obsessed with security when an international wave of student protest in 1968 saw students and agitators targeting government figures and buildings.

It was a year of intense student unrest throughout the world. In Paris, strikers joined students to man barricades in the streets in May. A huge, violent demonstration against the Vietnam War took place outside the US embassy in Grosvenor Square, London, in October.

The Prime Minister's security files for 1968, some of which are released today, reveal tips from members of the public of disruption by students of events attended by the Prime Minister. In June, Mr Wilson received a confidential letter from a senior member of staff at an English language school in London, warning him of a plan, organised by the German student leader "Danny the Red" Cohn-Bendit, to "wreck" an appearance by the Prime Minister at a university award ceremony. The letter revealed: "Two French students attending this school - both from the Sorbonne university and of good family and prospects - inform me that you are to preside at some ceremony at Bradford

BY NICK SCHOON AND PAUL LASHMAR

University sometime next month. It would appear that the gangster 'Danny the Red' has given instructions that the ceremony should be wrecked."

The letter was handed over to Special Branch and, amid special security precautions, Mr Wilson presented an honorary degree at Bradford to M Roche, reader at the Sorbonne.

Shortly before, Tony Benn found himself confronting the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) during 1968, ready to oppose it "with whatever force was necessary" to stop protesters penetrating Britain's nuclear weapons factory. But Mr Wilson doubted that he was up to the job. Mr Benn - who has supported the campaign for most of the years since then - was the Minister of Technology in a Labour Cabinet at the time. His department oversaw the development of nuclear energy for war and peace.

Between these two events, the Cabinet gave urgent consideration to what might happen during CND's traditional Good Friday march from London to the Royal Ordnance Factory at Burghfield, Berkshire, and the nearby Atomic



Anti-war rioting at Grosvenor Square, London, in 1968; and 'Danny the Red' (top), whose name was passed to the Special Branch



ers was unclear. He ordered his Home Secretary, James Callaghan, to meet Mr Benn and the Defence Secretary, Denis Healey. He insisted military helicopters should be put on stand-by to ferry in extra police and even troops if needed. Mr Callaghan warned the Cabinet that extreme left-wing foreign students, especially West Germans, were likely to infiltrate the march, intent on provoking confrontation.

He blamed them for the "new and more violent tactics", seen at the Grosvenor Square demonstration. In the end, the march was more heavily policed than ever before and there was little disorder.

Weapons Research Establishment (AWRE) at Aldermaston. Mr Benn told the Cabinet preparations had been made to resist any protest invasion at Burghfield, where Polaris nuclear missile warheads were

manufactured. His permanent secretary had already sent a note to 10 Downing Street, saying all the conventional explosives and fissile (radioactive) materials used to make the weapons were being moved

into the maximum-security magazines and bunkers in the factory's fortified core.

Any protesters who managed to penetrate the perimeter and outer defences would be blasted by firemen's hoses and

have police dogs set on them. But the Prime Minister was unconvinced, and urgent talks were held between ministers on the day before the 12 April march, both within Cabinet and outside it. With three forces

involved - the AWRE's, the Ministry of Defence's force and the civilian, Thames Valley force - he complained to Cabinet that the ultimate responsibility for controlling any attempted invasion by protest-

Cabinet 'played it cool' over Powell

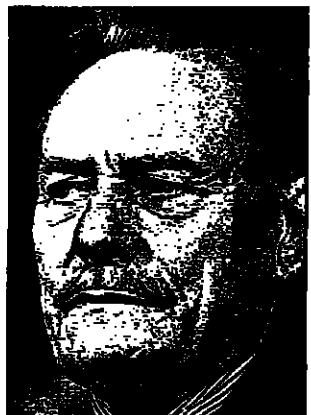
BY PAUL LASHMAR

IMMIGRATION WAS the most inflammatory domestic issue of 1968, with the Labour Government terrified it would lead to violence and unrest.

In February, Harold Wilson rushed through controversial legislation to stop immigration by UK passport holders in East Africa. Then in April came the Tory politician Enoch Powell's "Rivers of Blood" speech, disowned even by his own party leader, Edward Heath.

Documents released today show that the prime minister was anxious to "play it cool" over the decision not to prosecute Mr Powell for incitement. His speech to West Midlands Conservatives provoked outrage with its inflammatory references to immigration being like a nation "heaping up its own funeral pyre".

The address came at a time of growing sensitivity to racial issues as Asian immigrants fled East Africa. He warned of the "national danger", adding the infamous lines: "As I look ahead I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see 'the river Tiber foaming with much blood'."



Enoch Powell: Speech was widely branded as racist

Within three days the decision had been taken not to prosecute Mr Powell under the 1965 Race Relations Act.

The mood of the British people was one of mounting opposition to immigration, one that the Wilson government felt impelled to take on board.

Documents show that the decision to rush through legislation to cut back on the numbers of immigrants caused a serious cabinet row.

Proposals for the legislation were introduced by James Callaghan, who was then the

home secretary, at a cabinet meeting on 15 February. He said the change was needed to deal with four immigration problems. The first to crack down on the clandestine entry of illegal immigrants; the second to stop the entry of children under the age of 16 to single parents; and the third to require immigrants to undertake health checks.

But it was the fourth item that has remained a blot on the history of the Wilson government. This proposed legislation to cease the right of foreign-born Commonwealth citizens to have automatic right of entry to Britain.

A cabinet debate then followed in which the strongest opponent was George Thomson. Mr Wilson summed up the debate by saying he felt the cabinet was not ready to make a decision, but a decision would have to be taken a week later.

However, by the time of the next cabinet meeting, Mr Wilson was taking a much harder line and clearly a great deal of behind-the-scenes political pressure had been brought on his ministers. The Bill was passed the next day and given royal assent inside a week.

PM prepared plan to hand over Falklands

HAROLD WILSON'S Labour government considered a 10-year "transitional period" to pave the way for transferring sovereignty of the Falkland Islands to Argentina, according to documents made public for the first time today.

Official papers released to the Public Record Office under the 30-year rule show that the Foreign Office was anxious to convince the islanders of the benefits of a transfer of sovereignty. However, talks with Buenos Aires foundered on the entrenched opposition of the islanders, who were determined to resist any change in their status.

The talks, opened in January 1966, were treated with deep suspicion by the islanders.

In 1968, four members of

the Islands' Council issued a public warning that they could be handed over "at any moment" to Argentina.

In February 1968 the islands' governor, Sir Cosmo Haskard, flew to London to seek reassurances from ministers about the direction the negotiations were taking. When he met the foreign secretary, George Brown, the depth of the islanders' hostility apparently took Brown by surprise.

"Mr Brown said he was exceedingly angry at the situation which had developed over the handling of the Falkland Islands' dispute with the Argentines," the minutes of the meeting noted.

"He could not understand why he had not been told before by the Commonwealth Office,

that, in the Governor's opinion, we were going too far."

Sir Cosmo returned to the Falklands to reassure the islanders that those in authority in Britain were now "fully informed" of their feelings.

However, a senior Foreign Office official, John Beith, warned that by making clear that the Government would not move without the islanders' consent, they had reduced the chances of a successful outcome to the negotiations.

"It is hardly consistent with our policy of trying to persuade the Falkland Islanders to see the advantages of an early transfer to make so abundantly clear that we would not and cannot move without them," he noted in a memorandum to Brown's private office.

Rage over civil servant's fun

RICHARD CROSSMAN, the crusty Lord President in Wilson's government, nearly choked with rage when he saw a photograph of Sir Paul Gore-Booth, the head of the Foreign Office, in his *Daily Telegraph* on 1 May 1968.

Sir Paul and his wife were dressed as Sherlock Holmes and Irene Adler. They were pictured at the airport with the Sherlock Holmes Society.

Mr Crossman condemned Sir Paul's "antics" at a meeting in Downing Street. The dismissive reply to his complaint angered him further.

Royals offer to scrap yacht

THE YEAR began with the Queen offering to dispense with the royal yacht *Britannia* as a cost-cutting gesture in light of the poor shape of the economy. *Britannia* was estimated to cost £550,000 a year to operate.

The Defence Secretary decided against scrapping the yacht. The Prime Minister's office took two months to reply to the Queen, who became anxious that the public be told her offer. A statement about the offer was issued.

The yacht was to continue in its role for 30 years.

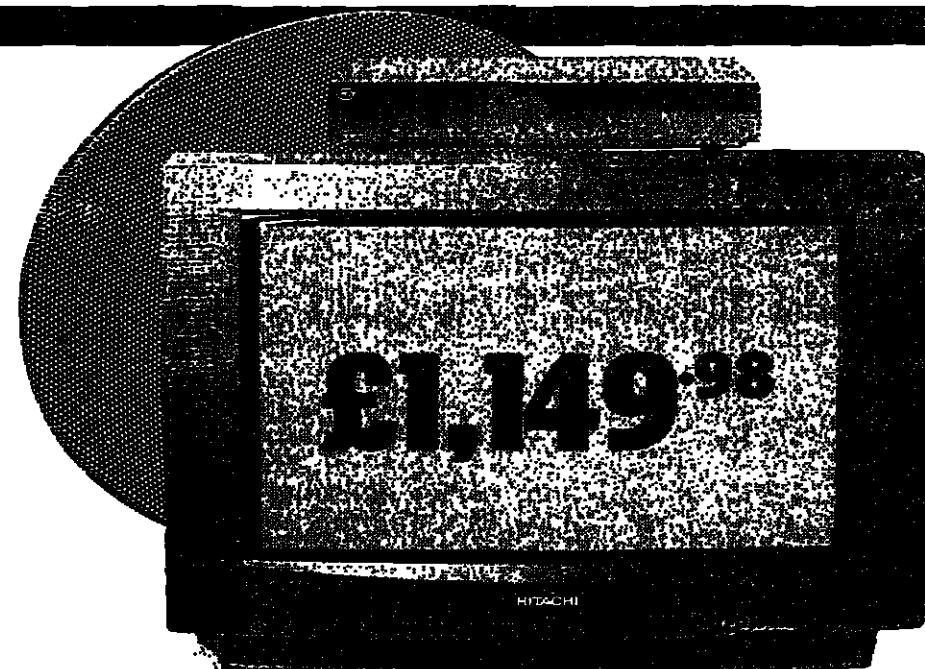
Some changes 'too modern'

PLANS BY Michael Ramsey, who was Archbishop of Canterbury, to modernise Remembrance Sunday were vetoed by the Queen.

A file shows the Church of England proposed a radically reformed day. It wanted to remove references to war, make it more "youth friendly" and even considered moving it from November.

However, a letter by the Home Secretary said: "As it was felt the Queen's views would be shared by many... the time for a change is not yet opportune."

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Militants close US embassy in Israel

THE UNITED STATES embassy in Tel Aviv was closed yesterday after Islamic militants threatened to blow it up in revenge for the recent allied bombing of Iraq.

An embassy spokesman, Larry Schwartz, said they had received a "direct and credible" threat by telephone on Wednesday night. The US ambassador to Israel, Ned Walker, responded by instructing his staff to stay at home for the day.

Mr Walker, a career diplomat, took up his post a year ago. He is a Middle East specialist who served previously as ambassador to Egypt. He was in Abu Dhabi during the 1991 Gulf War. Callers at the embassy on Hayarkon Street, a grim concrete fortress of a building overlooking the Tel Aviv beach, were advised that it would reopen next week.

Mr Schwartz described the closure as a "normal and practical step" of the kind adopted after the bombing of US embassies in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, and in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, on 7 August.

The threat was taken particularly seriously because of what he termed "the general rise in regional tensions in the past month or so", a reference to the confrontation between the US and Britain with the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

The spokesman denied an Israeli radio report that the caller had threatened to assassinate the ambassador or members of his staff.

Israeli police were on duty as usual, but a spokeswoman said they had not been reinforced. Hayarkon Street, a narrow, con-

BY ERIC SILVER
in Jerusalem

gested road, remained open to traffic but police sappers were checking vehicles in the embassy car park.

As of last night, Israeli police were not involved in hunting the would-be bombers. The only assistance requested by the Americans was to try to trace the threatening phone call. The CIA, through its station chief in Tel Aviv, has close working links with the Palestinian and Israeli security services.

US embassies have been on alert since the East African bombings, which killed 224 people, including 12 Americans. Washington blamed them on the fugitive Saudi Arabian millionaire, Osama bin Laden.

As tensions rose in the Gulf in early December, the State Department ordered 40 US embassies in Africa to close. Diplomats' families and non-essential embassy staff were called home from Israel and Kuwait, potential targets for retaliatory missile strikes. The US and Britain advised their citizens to stay away.

Meanwhile in Baghdad, Iraq's ambassador to the UN, Nizar Hamdoun, said Iraq will continue to attack US and British aircraft enforcing no-fly zones in the north and south of the country. In a statement broadcast on CNN, Mr Hamdoun said: "We will continue [to carry out attacks] until the US and the UK decide to pull out."

In spite of the threat, US planes conducted routine patrols yesterday in the southern and northern no-fly zones.



The three denominations controlling the Church of the Holy Sepulchre are fighting over where its new door should go Rick Bowmer/AP

No way out in Jerusalem church row

BY ERIC SILVER

"You can't open a cinema without at least two doors," Uri Mor, director of the Christian communities department in the Religious Affairs Ministry, said. So the Israelis are proposing to open a second door, enabling pilgrims to go in one end and out the other.

The three denominations sharing control under a fragile "status quo" dating back to the 1850s—the Greek Orthodox, the Armenians and the Catholics—have agreed in principle, so long as it is defined as an "emergency" door. They can argue about it again once the emergency of 2000 is over. But that is only the first step.

Mr Mor, a mild Jewish bureaucrat who grew up in Nazareth, is negotiating a way through the labyrinth. Where

exactly will the door be cut? Who will hold the key? Will it be an exit, or an entrance? Above all, will any of the churches gain or lose an inch of holy stonework? Will it give a rival a precedent?

So far, they have agreed that it will be an exit only. Since Saladin conquered the holy land from the Crusaders, the key has been kept by two Muslim families. The churches trust them, but not each other. That will remain the only entrance.

The logical route is down a corridor, now blocked, that existed during Crusader times. The arches are still visible. But to reach an exit there, you would have to go through an iron door and a small room. The Greeks hold the key to the iron door. The Armenians fear that pushing a corridor that way would give the Greeks more

rights. They would have the key to the new exit.

So the Armenians are proposing an alternative route. The Israelis checked, and discovered it would come out in the Al Hanka mosque, which abuts the Christian shrine. The last thing the Israelis want is to bring in the Jerusalem Muslims, which would mean Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

Then there is the question of where the other exit will emerge. That will require the consent of two lesser churches, the Copts and the Ethiopians, who have been locked in conflict for the past 20 years over a tiny monastery, built on the roof of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Israelis are hoping for an answer early in the new year, but Mr Mor is not betting on it. The precedents are discouraging. When the cupola soaring

above the Holy Sepulchre was restored earlier this decade, he says, "it took them 30 years to decide what the colour should be". He added: "We work in minutes; they have their own system of time."

The churches have been arguing for 27 years over who should repair the four arches of the rotunda over the tomb of Jesus. The Greeks, the Armenians, the Copts and the Syrian Orthodox all staked a claim. "If you repair," Mr Mor explained, "you are the owner."

In the end, the Religious Affairs Ministry is doing the job, at a cost of \$250,000 to the Israeli taxpayer. The rival patriarchs have signed the plans, but the Syrians are trying to seize another two inches nearer the tomb. Mr Mor goes there every day to make sure nothing is a fraction out of place.

Sierra Leone capital attacked

BY MARCUS TANNER

WEST AFRICAN peacekeepers repelled a rebel attack on the outskirts of Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown, yesterday, shelling the hills around Hastings, the site of the main airport.

On Wednesday the Nigerian-led peacekeepers failed to hold on to the central town of Lunsar, 60 miles east of Freetown, prompting claims by the UN representative in Sierra Leone, Francis Okello, that rebel forces had taken control of more than half the territory of the former British colony.

The attack on Hastings came after an assault on another outpost of the capital at Waterloo, 18 miles east of the city. The spokesman for the West African force, Ecomog, said that at least 40 people had been killed in the latest round of fighting.

Fighting broke out in Sierra Leone in 1991, and worsened after an army faction in 1997 ousted the elected president, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. Ecomog restored President Kabbah to power in March, with strong British support, but the fighting has intensified.

Sierra Leone's Information Minister, Julius Spencer, yesterday denied that the rebels controlled the whole of the north of Sierra Leone, although he admitted that Lunsar and the northern capital of Makeni were in rebel hands.

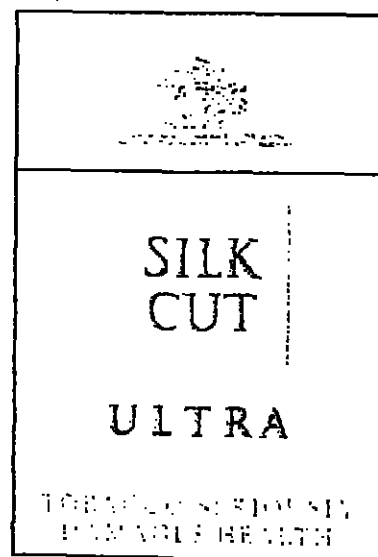
Reinforcements have poured into Sierra Leone from Nigeria—more than 7,000 since the weekend, boosting the force to around 17,000. The rebel forces are estimated at 20,000.

The rebels are demanding the removal from power of President Kabbah and the release of their captured leader, Foday Sankoh, who has been sentenced to death in Freetown for treason. Their cause enjoys little support in the capital, owing to what appears a well-deserved reputation for committing atrocities against civilians.

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Clinton to escape with censure vote

THE CHANCES are rising that President Bill Clinton will escape a full-scale impeachment trial. Despite furious protests from some Republicans, the most likely plans all involve a motion of censure, which would finally end the long-running saga in two weeks' time.

The US House of Representatives voted to impeach the President on two counts, but it is the other house of Congress,

the Senate, that must try him. Senators, including Republicans, want to resolve the episode as rapidly as possible, given that it seems unlikely the two-thirds majority exists to oust Mr Clinton.

The deal is being thrashed out between Senator Trent Lott, the Senate Majority Leader and

chief Republican, and his opposite number from the Democrats, Tom Daschle. "We're working on this in a way that meets both of our mutual objectives, which in large measure could be defined as doing it fairly and expeditiously," Mr Daschle said. Mr Lott indicated he saw no need for witnesses. "Are witnesses required? I don't think so," he said.

A preliminary motion being

discussed will decide whether impeachment - over which House Republicans have laboured for months - is to be ditched by the Senate.

The House Judiciary Committee chairman, Henry Hyde, who ran the impeachment hearings and is one of the managers for the Senate trial, told Mr Lott in a letter that he was concerned that the motion "would unwisely short-circuit

the process. I agree that we must move with all deliberate speed to resolve this matter," he said.

"However, we must not act so hastily that the President and the House of Representatives do not have a fair opportunity to present the case and the Senate does not have a fair opportunity to review a meaningful, factual record." It was important that at least a limited number of

witnesses are called, he argued.

Some Republican Senators are also unhappy. "I think the most important thing here is following the constitutional process and that constitutional process is a trial - hopefully, a fair and speedy trial - and the rendering of a judgment," said Senator Phil Gramm, an influential Texas Republican.

Not until next week, when Congress returns to reconvene

on 6 January, will the timetable become clear.

Despite his travails, Mr Clinton is the man most admired by Americans, according to a poll by CNN, USA Today and Gallup, 18 per cent put Mr Clinton at the top, up from 14 per cent last year. Perhaps it should worry him, though, that other presidents headed the list when things were worst for them: Richard Nixon in 1973 (he was im-

peached in 1975), Jimmy Carter in 1980 (defeated the same year), and Lyndon Johnson in 1968 (he decided not to run again). The next most admired people this year were the Pope, Billy Graham and Michael Jordan.

Less surprisingly, Hillary Clinton is the most admired woman by a large margin - 28 per cent - ahead of Oprah Winfrey, Elizabeth Dole and Baroness Thatcher.

Shooting of woman stirs race passions

BY ANDREW GUMBEL
in Los Angeles

JUST ABOUT the only certain facts known about Tyisha Miller's death are that one minute she was lying in her car at a Californian petrol station with a pistol in her lap, and that the next a passing police patrol was pumping her and her car full of bullets.

Three days after the 19-year-old black woman was killed in Riverside, 40 miles east of Los Angeles, the case is rousing political and racial passions, with relatives accusing the police of murder and the officers involved failing to produce a satisfactory explanation.

It appears Ms Miller pulled into the petrol station in the early hours of Monday because of a flat tyre. When her cousin, Anthonette Joiner, arrived to help, she found Ms Miller lying in the car with her seat pushed back, the radio blaring and the heating on full blast. According to some reports, she was also foaming at the mouth.

The police arrived in response to an emergency call from Ms Joiner and began pounding on the windows of the car to elicit a response. What happened next is, as yet, unclear, but the result was that Ms Miller and her car were riddled with as many as two dozen rounds of ammunition.

At first the four officers, three whites and one Hispanic, claimed Ms Miller had fired a round from her pistol, but a police spokesman later said that was not certain. Two of the officers have been suspended pending an investigation.

Ms Miller's relatives claim she did not even reach for the gun. "They murdered my niece," said Lenora Butler, an aunt. Local civil rights groups have appealed for calm until the facts become clear.

Racial tensions were already mounting in Riverside because of a debate about the merits of naming a local high school after Martin Luther King.



A visitor at Leni Riefenstahl's exhibition. Early in her career (top right), she worked for Hitler; now in her nineties (right) she denies any wrongdoing. Hans Edinger/AP

Hitler's film-maker is back on show

EUROPEAN TIMES
POTSDAM, GERMANY

THE FIRST entry in the visitors' book is succinct: "At last." Another gushes: "A great exhibition in the time of political correctness." "How much injustice was inflicted upon this ingenious artist in post-war Germany," fulminates a third.

Judging by the opinions expressed by punters who trekked out to the Film Museum in Potsdam, the exhibition that all Germany is talking about was long overdue. There is not one dissenting remark in the book, yet outside the museum a debate is raging. There are many who have vowed never to set foot in Potsdam, because they are appalled and even a little frightened.

For the person honoured in her first retrospective as a cinematographer is Leni Riefenstahl: Nazi pin-up, purveyor of propaganda films of the Third Reich, and latterly a photographer of naked Africans and fish. That, admittedly, is too flip-pant a description of her oeuvre. Riefenstahl is a remarkable

woman who has tried her hand at five different careers in her 96 years, and can never be discounted from launching a sixth, once she recovers from her recent bout of pneumonia.

She has seen a lot and done it all, including having her bottom pinched by Goebbels and Hitler, who both pursued her relentlessly, and might even have bedded her. Mussolini was also a great admirer of her art. But does she deserve the accolade heaped upon her now, ask the sceptics? And if so, why now?

"We are of the opinion that Leni Riefenstahl has played an important - if not the nicest - role in German film history," explains the museum's Dorett Molitor. "It was a very courageous decision to put on this exhibition," she continues. "We wanted a discussion."

That they certainly got. But it is one that is being waged by those who have decided to be enraptured by it in advance, and those who will spit at it, unseen, from a great distance.

Neither side will convince the other, because both sides are already convinced.

It is an abiding cliché, according to the catalogue, that Riefenstahl made nothing but stirring Nazi films commissioned by Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry. To set the record straight, several of her movies are played on monitors placed side by side.

In a long, narrow room, Hitler is screaming from one screen. That is *Triumph of the Will*, the best of the genre, according to the critics. Despite the monotonous subject - a little Austrian addressing a rapturous crowd - the film is mesmerising. Its potency is such that it remains banned in Germany to this day, for fear of raising unhealthy political passions. *Olympia*, Riefenstahl's film about the 1936 Berlin

Olympic Games, plays to the left. The special effects are more advanced, but the subject matter even more tedious. There is only so much one wants to see of discus throwers. But back in those days, this film was ahead of its contemporaries in technique. Riefenstahl was showered with prizes, and not just in fascist countries.

These are displayed in the company of Riefenstahl's other stabs at entertainment. While Hitler is yelling from one screen, and the swimmers take a dive on the other, some exorcising melodramas are unfolding just a few feet away. There is the *Blue Light*, a film whose supernatural plot is too embarrassing to relate. Or *Tiefenland*, the Spanish romance in which the Pyrenees meet the Tyrol in a universe of kitsch, populated by happy peasants and heart-broken

gypsy girls. Riefenstahl picked the gypsies from a camp. No more can be said on this subject, because Riefenstahl has lavished much of her Propaganda Ministry earnings on expensive lawyers. She has spent the past 50 years suing anybody who dares to mention where those gypsies might have ended up during the Holocaust.

So let us hastily move on. The point is that, apart from the two stirring films paid for by Goebbels, Riefenstahl's works are plain silly. They put into sharp focus her claim that, had she not been put out of the film-making business after the war, she might have been another Fellini. Her films are so bad, they deserve cult status.

As for those muscle-bound, glinting bodies she photographed in Africa in her later years, the less said the better. They have much in common with the fascist representation of discus-throwers of

Olympia, and little to do with the human race, presented as they are in the manner one would admire a splendid racehorse. In other words: bestial.

All this has been said and written before about her work, which is why Riefenstahl has had to wait until now for her first full retrospective. She has helped to provide the exhibits, ensuring they present her in a favourable light. She has waited more than 50 years for rehabilitation, so it is ironic that it should come from an east German museum run by left-leaning feminists.

They have their own reasons. They are trying to fill the void left by communism, and in the process are finding it hard to distinguish between taboos ordained by the wicked state and those imposed by conscience. "We want a new treatment of our history," says Ms Molitor. Leni Riefenstahl, an expert at new treatments, is happy to oblige.

IMRE KARACS

Castro celebrates 40 years in power

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

BATTERED BUT unbowed after 40 years in power, Fidel Castro will deliver a celebratory anniversary address tonight in the same square in Santiago de Cuba where he proclaimed victory over the dictator Fulgencio Batista on 1 January 1959.

The speech will be the climax of a week in which the Cuban state-run media has focused on the birth of the socialist regime, which has withstood 36 years of trade embargo from America and the collapse and disappearance of the Soviet Union, the island's protector and economic patron.

Amid continuing economic hardship and harsh state treatment of dissent, public feelings have been muted. But the media has had a field day, mocking Washington for the decades of predictions of Castro's demise, and publishing letters of congratulation from the Pope and leaders from around the world.

"Under your leadership," Cuba has achieved "new successes in the struggle to safeguard national independence... and has persisted in the socialist path", the Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, wrote to Castro, one of the last Communist leaders and among the longest surviving rulers of any ideological persuasion.

Castro's triumph in the two-year civil war was sealed by Ernesto "Che" Guevara's successful attack on the central city of Santa Clara on 28 December 1958, and by the almost simultaneous fall of Santiago de Cuba in the east of the island.

Since 1960, the regime has been under economic, and at times military attack from the US. But that very pressure has enabled him to draw upon Cuba's fierce nationalism for support. Long a hero in much of the Third World, Castro is now largely seen even by his own people as a man whose time is past. But, apart from periodic rumours about his health, he appears as firmly in control as ever.

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Sterling and dollar slip at the start

THE PRECISE exchange rates at which 11 member currencies are locked against the euro were published yesterday, ahead of the midnight launch of the new European single currency.

The ceremonies creating an economic superpower to rival the United States were clouded, however, by the reopening of a festering disagreement over the presidency of the European Central Bank (ECB). The ministers gathered in Brussels - excluding Gordon Brown and Germany's Oskar Lafontaine - made a determined effort to damp down the latest eruption of the dispute.

BY DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

The pound, which will buy about 1.42 euros at the current exchange rate, lost value, as did the dollar after the official publication of the conversion rates. The dollar was trading at an initial value of \$1.1685 to the euro.

Many analysts believe the pound and dollar will weaken further against the new currency when trading picks up in the new year.

The main European stock markets were closed, and the foreign exchanges and bond markets were exceedingly subdued. In the City, where technical

steps to implement the conversion got into full swing at lunchtime yesterday, there was a sense of anti-climax.

"It's like the aftermath of an elaborate wedding. It was a symbolic moment, but it's the least important part of the marriage," said Alison Cottrell, an analyst at PaineWebber.

One less-than-enthusiastic trader said: "It's New Year's Eve and we all just want to get to our parties."

The formal rates were close to the end-of-year market rates, and therefore sprang no surprises on the financial markets.

Some volatility is expected on the foreign exchanges next

week as investors and dealers get accustomed to the euro. In the longer term, most analysts expect the pound to fall against the euro.

"When we come back on Monday, sterling will be a small currency. It's a huge change from being the biggest European currency," said Ms Cottrell.

Investors - including central banks seeking to adjust their foreign exchange reserves - are expected to sell dollars and sterling to boost their holdings of euros. "There is a very good case for believing the euro will

be a strong currency," said Ian Harwood of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the investment bank.

Just a few analysts hold the contrary view that the pound will strengthen as investors seek a safe haven against the euro.

The French government insisted yesterday that Wim Duisenberg, the ECB's president, must step down after four years in favour of a French candidate.

Mr Duisenberg had said, in an interview published in *Le*

Monde yesterday morning, that he would not stick to the four-year compromise struck last May, but would instead stay on for more of his eight-year term.

Jean-Claude Juncker, Prime Minister of Luxembourg, probably spoke for the rest of the EU governments when he arrived at the historic finance ministers' meeting yesterday. "It's not of overwhelming political intelligence to reopen the debate," he said.

France's stubbornness in insisting last spring that Jean-Claude Trichet, the Banque de France governor, should get the ECB job had exasperated other

member governments. But equally, most will despair of Mr Duisenberg's sense of timing. The controversy-prone central banker said yesterday - a day too late - that from now on he would have no comment about the question.

A spokesman for the European Central Bank in Frankfurt insisted: "His contract runs for the full eight years and that is untouchable."

But Dominique Strauss-Kahn, France's Finance Minister, referred back to Mr Duisenberg's indication last May that he did intend to step down early. "His comments were enshrined in writing, they are public and

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6.55957	French francs
1936.27	Italian lire
166.386	Spanish pesetas
200.482	Portuguese escudos
9.45573	Finnish markka
0.787564	Irish punt
40.3399	Belgian franc
	Luxembourg franc
2.20371	Dutch guilder
13.7603	Austrian schillings

everybody knows them, and therefore I see no reason to fear that Mr Duisenberg will not stick to what he said."

Europe on a high, Britain still low key

VIEW FROM BRUSSELS

OUTSIDE THE Union Jack was fluttering, but inside the Council of Ministers building in Brussels, Britain's briefing room had been turned into a makeshift TV set, complete with make-up facilities. With no Treasury minister attending there was, explained one official, little prospect of the UK having anything very much to say.

History was in the making and the British presence was deliberately minimalist. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, elected not to join the gathering of finance ministers, leaving the job of representing the UK to the British ambassador to the EU, Sir Stephen Wall.

According to the Treasury, the Chancellor stayed away because the meeting was purely "procedural". But Britain was alone among the 15 EU member states to be represented by its ambassador.

By contrast Denmark, Sweden and Greece, which are also staying out of the first wave, sent ministers, two of whom joined the rhetorical euphoria and outlined ambitions to join the euro.

Not that Mr Brown was the only or even the most prominent absentee. Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's Finance Minister, refused to break his family holiday and is thought to be sunning himself somewhere in Florida. His embarrassed deputy, Werner Müller, the Economic minister, was forced to explain, "Some six months ago," Mr Müller told a press conference, "the current finance minister booked a holiday in a very distant area with his wife and children and was not in a position to break it. As if to punish Mr Lafontaine for his absence, his fellow finance ministers indulged in a chorus of appreciation of his predecessor, Theo Waigel, praising his contribution to the birth of the euro."

Uniquely, the finance ministers' meeting was televised, signifying that the decisions had long since been taken, and allowing the politicians to concentrate on what they do best: outbidding each other in their rhetoric. France's Dominique Strauss-Kahn spoke of "an historic day for the European enterprise". Carlo Azeglio Ciampi of Italy, argued: "This is a milestone in Europe's history, a project which might, at times, have seemed Utopian." With a final flourish he added: "I am proud to call myself a European citizen born in

BY STEPHEN CASTLE
AND KATHERINE BUTLER
in Brussels

Italy. That is how I feel today."

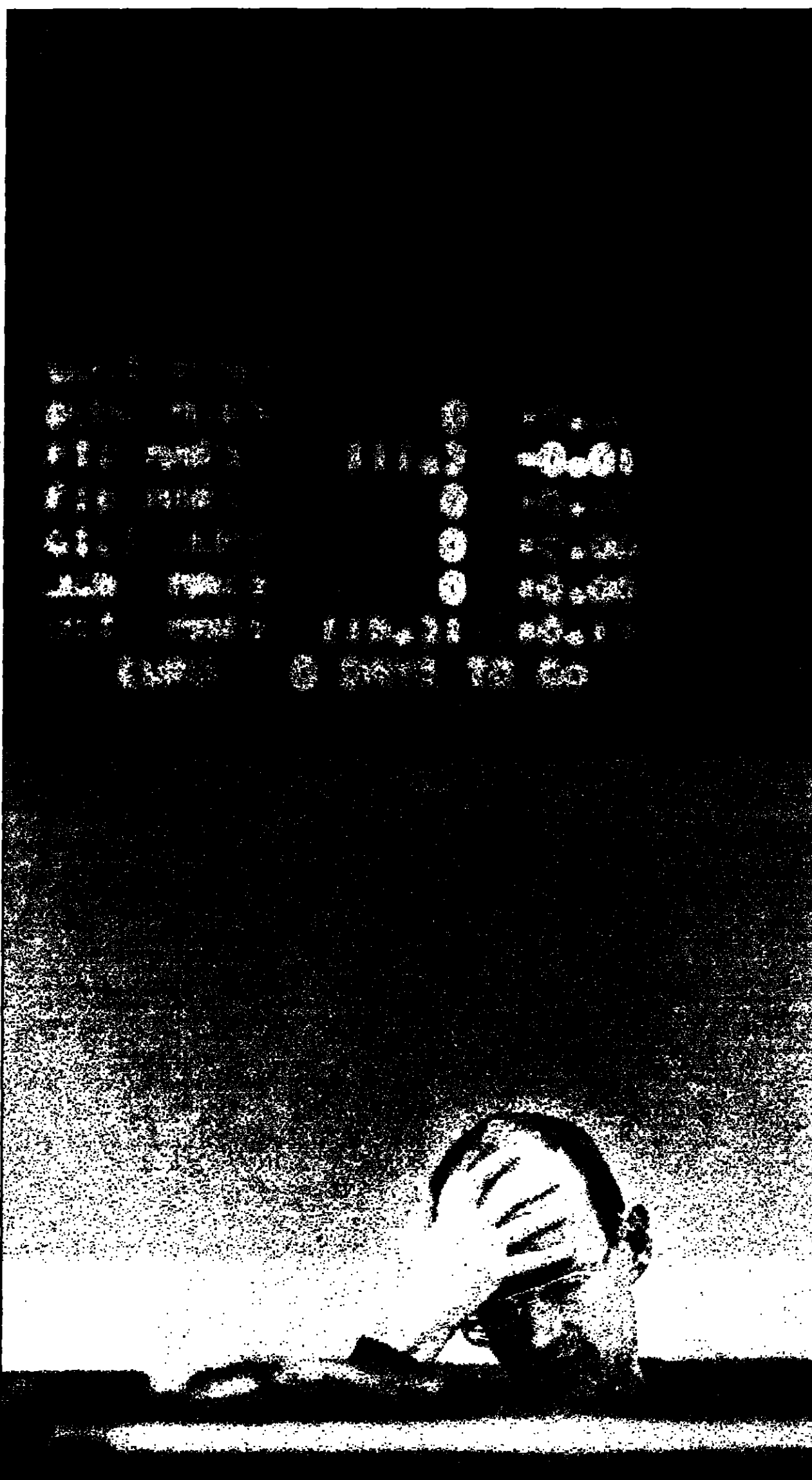
There was less euphoria from Charlie McCreevy, the Irish Finance Minister who had left his sick-bed. Suffering from a particularly virulent strain of "flu Mr McCreevy joked that he was so doped it was fortunate that the signing ceremony did not involve a drug test. He added that monetary union was "a bit like an Irish marriage before the divorce referendum. Once you are in, you're in for life."

But rhetoric, rather than realism, was the order of the day and such was the sentiment of the occasion that there was even a heart-felt tribute to a senior Treasury mandarin. Sir Nigel Wicks has chaired the monetary committee that has been instrumental in the preparations for today's launch. To his evident embarrassment, finance ministers broke into a round of applause to salute his contribution.

The only ones displaying higher levels of excitement were the scores of eight-year-olds from European schools dressed in plastic capes and drafted in to release 3,000 blue and yellow balloons from the courtyard of EU headquarters at precisely 1.55pm local time, five minutes after the formal signing.

Jean Louis Fourmy, of the Brussels company that provided the balloons, said they symbolised prosperity rather than soaring inflation as some sceptics had suggested. "Normally for celebrations we would let off 10,000 balloons, but we were only asked for 3,000. I think it's because they left it so late to organise," Mr Fourmy said. And some sources said there were only 2,900 balloons.

But the best image of the day came late on, as the ministers struggled to open the salmanazars, 9-litre bottles of Feuille champagne from Epernay. Mysteriously, Commission officials drafted in the same brand that is drunk in the White House but had not investigated the logistics of prising open such large bottles. The clear winner was Wim Duisenberg, president of the European Central Bank, who was the first to pop his cork. At this particular moment in history Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, was still grappling with a pair of pliers.



A trader at the City of London offices of Nomura, the Japanese securities house, yesterday

Neville Elder

Business to pay \$51bn for change

VIEW FROM THE CITY

THE TRADITIONAL revelry of New Year's Eve was cancelled yesterday for tens of thousands of City staff as the big financial institutions mobilised to ensure that they are up and running when dealing starts in the euro on Monday.

With little more than 75 hours from the moment that exchange rates were fixed on New Year's Eve for the 11 currencies being subsumed into the euro to the opening of Tokyo's foreign exchange market in the early hours of Monday, exhaustive plans have been made to ensure everything goes without a hitch.

During that time \$2,100bn (£1,312bn) of government securities and worldwide bank deposits worth \$460bn will have to be converted from the "legacy" currencies - German marks, French francs, Italian lire and so on - to euros.

The total private sector bill for the changeover has been put at \$51bn.

The conversion is relatively simple. Colin Stringer, head of Euro services at Cap Gemini, the IT consulting firm, says: "It is like changing from Fahrenheit to Celsius, the temperature does not change."

The difficulty arises from the sheer scale of the operation, and the fact that no one can afford for it to go wrong.

The US investment bank Merrill Lynch, which will use 900 staff around the clock in London and New York this weekend, estimates that no fewer than 5000 "milestones" will have to be passed before it can be satisfied that the bank can trade euros without a hitch.

"It will affect client statements, client balances, trading positions, cash balances and historical data," explains Mitch Chivers, Merrill Lynch's global euro co-ordinator. "There is the considerable task of redenominating debt."

The changeover will affect almost every market, even those in currencies that are not directly involved in the single currency. Sterling, for instance, will no longer be quoted against marks but against euros.

As well as currencies and government bonds, share prices will have to be repriced in euros, even though legally clients will still be able to settle in national currencies if they wish.

Staff at banks in Tokyo and New York will also be in their offices this weekend, although London, because of its unique position as the centre of international foreign exchange

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

and bond trading, will be where most activity is concentrated. Nor is it just computer systems staff who will miss the New Year festivities.

Traders, settlement and back office staff will all have to be in to ensure that they are ready, while in many cases top management will be on hand to troubleshoot and encourage the troops.

To ensure that key staff are able to get to work the Corporation of London is paying London Underground to keep the Waterloo and City line open on New Year's Day, while the Rotherhithe tunnel, an important link for those working in Canary Wharf, will be kept open for the weekend. There will also be 3,500 free parking spaces in the City.

Hotel rooms across London have been booked months ahead to provide accommodation. minibuses for office staff have been laid on.

Firms are also providing round-the-clock catering, while pubs, restaurants and coffee bars in the City and Canary Wharf, which would normally be closed over the Bank Holiday weekend, will be open.

The Bank of England has won plaudits from institutions for the way it has managed the preparations, an irony given the far from Europhile views of Eddie George, the Governor.

Mr Stringer says that while the big firms have been planning for this weekend for 18 months or more and are justifiably confident they have done all they can, the worry is about what he calls the "lemmings", a cross between a lemming and an ostrich. "A number of smaller players are in a state of denial about EMU. For them," he says, "it is already too late."

Most experts are discounting the meltdown scenario, particularly as they expect, for a week at least, trading to be tentative while investors hang back to be sure that the glitches have definitely been ironed out before risking their cash.

What the big houses are seeking to avoid is payments going astray or settlement systems not being able to cope. Most of all, they fear that their computer people will still be running the checks when the clients start to ring on the murky dawn of January 4.

Founder's currency dream comes true

BY NICK ANTONOVICS

MANY HAVE played a part in Europe's monetary union project but Pierre Werner can justifiably claim to have started it.

Werner, then prime minister of Luxembourg, first advocated a European currency, which he called the Euro, in a speech in Strasbourg in 1960.

Thirty-eight years later, he told Reuters in an interview: "There was a historical need for European countries to start a currency union, which still exists. It is simply to put an end to the periodic world wars which started in Europe."

Mr Werner remembered the 1930s, when "everyone wanted to protect themselves and devalue to promote exports". He became interested in a proposal

WERNER'S VISION

by a Belgian banker, Fernand Collin, for wider use of a common unit of account in the new European Community. "I believed that if (the 1930s) happened again it would be a shambles - we would have monetary war."

After becoming prime minister in 1959, he took up the cause publicly. But it was not until the late 1960s, after sterling's November 1967 devaluation, and signs of trouble in the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates, that other member states took an interest.

Mr Werner was appointed chairman of a committee to come up with an official blueprint, which was presented in

1970 and endorsed by European leaders in March 1971. It called on the bloc to achieve a full monetary union by 1980.

The Werner Plan advocated a central economic policy-making body and a system of central banks. Aspects of national budgets, such as the "size of balances and the methods of financing or utilising them", would be fixed at EU level, and decisions would be accountable to the European Parliament.

The first stage of the plan was set in motion in 1972, but by 1974 it had foundered under the combined weight of the 1971 collapse of Bretton Woods and the 1973 oil shock.

Mr Werner told Reuters he



Pierre Werner: Common currency could end wars

was optimistic that the euro would last, noting that EU governments were more willing to negotiate and compromise than their predecessors.

Mr Werner's role was honoured yesterday when he received the first copy of the EU's *Official Journal*, legally enacting the conversion rates into the euro.

No escape from currency that will rule our common market

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

BRITAIN MIGHT not be a founder member of the "euro-zone" but the launch of the single currency will nevertheless have a profound effect on British business.

Although outside the single-currency bloc, from today companies here will be able to account, issue shares and pay their taxes in euros. A small number may even offer to pay their employees partly in euros.

Most surveys show that British businesses favour entry to the single currency by a three to one. There is a small but vociferous band, led by figures such as the Dixons chairman Sir Stanley Kalms, who are implacably opposed, more for political and philosophical rea-

sons than because they fear it will be bad for business.

But the majority of companies - both large and small - sense that it would be in their business interests for Britain to be in. For that reason, they are likely to embrace the euro, meaning that Britain, to some extent, will become a de facto member of the single currency.

In any event, not being a member of monetary union does not mean British business can ignore its arrival or escape its impact. The European Union, with its 320 million customers, is our biggest single trading partner, accounting for some 55 per cent of all UK trade in goods.

FUTURE FOR BUSINESS

From a practical standpoint, businesses will be affected in two main ways. First they will have to get used to being paid in euros - which means shouldering the exchange rate risk as sterling's value against the new currency bobs around.

Second, British companies are unlikely to be immune from the increased harmonisation of prices across Europe that the single currency produces.

According to the latest survey of readiness for the single currency by the consultants KPMG, two-thirds of companies price variably across Europe and the gap between the highest and lowest prices is as high as 57 per cent. "This means that

pressure on prices might result in a significant revenue squeeze for many companies," says Michael Littlechild, a partner with KPMG Consulting.

The survey also shows that two-thirds of businesses across Europe expect prices to fall with the introduction of the euro. Only 30 per cent think it will mean higher profits in the short term but in the longer term 77 per cent think the impact will be positive.

Douglas Godden, head of economic policy at the Confederation of British Industry, said: "There will be a process of convergence as prices become more transparent. The euro will also mean more trade across borders and that means more competition, which will tend to lead to price convergence."

New year tips: Forecasters were wrong-footed by the events of 1998. This year could be just as tricky

Telecoms was the name of the game

IT'S RARE INDEED for a Footsie constituent to emerge as the best performing share of the year. Step forward Colt Telecom, which has comfortably out-dialled the rest of the stock market with an astonishing 500 per cent advance.

Normally it is an obscure, tertiary share which claims top spot. Last year it was Shield Diagnostic with a 410 per cent gain.

But in some respects, Colt runs true to form. It may enjoy a £5.5bn capitalisation yet it is still a fledgling, blue-sky operation which is a long way from achieving anything quite so crude as a profit.

Still telecoms was the name of the investment game in 1998, and Colt's remarkable progress - it arrived at the equivalent of 67p nearly two years ago - is a dramatic example of the way telephony

WINNERS AND LOSERS



DEREK PAIN

shares are currently adored on both sides of the Atlantic.

Colt's progress in the year was achieved despite its loss hitting a new high - £23.5m.

Indeed losses are expected to increase. The consensus forecast for this year is £80m and the investment house BT Alex Brown sees the deficit widening to £85m in the year

2000. But, unless the market has got its wires completely crossed, Colt, which joined Footsie during the year, should be a sure-fire money-spinner, say those who should know. It will do this either by retaining its independence or, more likely, being taken over at a fancy price.

Energis, another fledgling telecom group which in the eyes of some analysts would be an ideal merger partner for the bigger Colt, captured second place, up 423 per cent, in a year when Footsie scored a 15 per cent advance.

It has had an even shorter market life than Colt, having been hived off from National Grid a year ago. And, like its bigger rival, it too has yet to scent the merest suggestion of making money, losing £62m in the year to March. But analysts believe its profits charge may

occur rather more quickly than Colt's with, perhaps, a modest return in the year 2000.

Other telecoms buzzed. Orange, with a 164 per cent gain, and Telewest Communications, 150 per cent, just failed to get into the year's top 10. Even such a power as BT, on past form far too big ever to hit the winners table, joined the telephony party, with a near 90 per cent surge.

Gresham Computing, a software group with an erratic record, slipped into the top 10 at number three. But some longtime shareholders have yet to get their money back. In one of the earlier market computer surges the shares, on takeover and trading hopes, nudged 200p.

Just to prove there is life in some of the battered and bruised engineers, Cammell Laird, once a famed Mersey-

WINNERS AND LOSERS			
Winners		Losers	
	Closing price		%fall
Colt Telecom	896.5p	Cortecs	9.5p
Energis	1345	Selector	2.5p
Gresham Comp	101.5p	Cadore	0.5p
Cammell Ltd	682.5p	Ronson	1.25p
Ind Energy	512.5p	N Petroleum	2.5p
Fibernet	327.5p	Sibit Energy	4p
Phytopharm	171.5p	Seator	11p
Fidens	86.5p	Marchpole	12p
RMI	463.5p	Beauford	3.25p
Sherwood Int	1355p	Telapac	33p

side shipbuilder, captured fourth place.

Fibernet, with a national communications network, is another blue sky share: so is Phytopharm, seeking to produce drugs from plants. Independent Energy, still

below its best level, is benefiting from the freeing up of the domestic electricity and gas markets and has announced its first profit.

The bottom 10 represents yet another collection of sad, fallen hopes. Cortecs is a drugs

group which, like so many of the breed, was over-hyped with the shares topping 400p in 1996. It's been all downhill since then although there have been some encouraging progress reports.

Cadore is the Capolito Roma upmarket retailer which is struggling to make its merger with what was once Owen & Robinson work.

Ronson is also an upmarket group which has experienced a long, hard stock market winter. Once a brewer, it was drawn into luxury products

and immediately ran into trouble. Victor Kiam, the man who liked a certain product so much, etc, etc, is now running the show and helping bankroll the group. The shares first arrived in the mid-1980s at 60p. Stentor appears among the losers, demonstrating that even when winners abound

from a particular industry there are bound to be casualties. It is an Irish telecom share which, after flying high, came crashing down to earth as cash failed to match ambitions.

Telespec, making advance telecom equipment, is another bucking an industry trend. It warned results would be disappointing. Once again it is a case of hopes being dashed. In 1995 the group seemed to be capable of carrying all before it with the shares hitting 1,045p.

And just outside the bottom 10 is a once proud name, Albert Fisher. The food group is showing signs of getting its act together but the market has yet to be convinced that the company, 73p five years ago, has put all its bad old ways behind it. The shares limp along at 5.5p.

Even the experts look shaky in the turbulence

THE PERFORMANCE of our fund managers' tips last year shows that turbulent market conditions can catch out even the experts. Three of our fund managers recorded healthy gains and comfortably outperformed the index. But the other four suffered as concerns grew about weakening consumer spending and the risk of recession.

Top of the pile was Colin McLean at Scottish Value Management, who tipped British Energy. Shares in the nuclear generator soared by 62 per cent as investors sought the relative safety of power generation. A bottle of champagne to our winner.

Unilever, tipped by Vanessa James at Legal & General, also did well with a 29 per cent gain as the market continued to warm to the re-shaping of the consumer goods group by Niall FitzGerald, chairman.

First Choice Holidays, the selection of John Hatherly at M&G also did well. Tipped at 100p, the stock soared to 1666p by the summer, helped by good figures and the £134m purchases of Unijet and Hayes & Jarvis. Though fears over consumer spending dragged the stock off this peak, they showed a healthy gain by the year's end.

At the other end of the scale, British Airways hit turbulence due to a slowdown in traffic and a dramatic fall in higher-margin business and club class fares as City banks and other frequent-flyers tightened purse strings. The much-mooted takeover of EMI failed to materialise, putting the shares in a spin, as the slowdown in CD sales continued.

Mike Grimble, Norwich Union.

Tip: Airtours 384p.

AGAINST a background of a slowing UK economy, consumers are preferring to spend on holidays rather than making commitments to big ticket goods. Airtours has the advantage of a strong management team running a company with a good brand and a strong balance sheet. The recent convertible bond placing offers the scope for further growth by acquisition following successful moves in Scandinavia and the US.

It is this broad geographical base which makes Airtours less reliant than its competitors on holiday demand in the UK. Given its firm control of costs, Airtours should be able to generate good earnings growth. Although the share price has been volatile over the last year, it stands at a discount of 20 per cent to the market and is well placed to make up ground in 1999.

John Hatherly, M&G
Tip: Clydeport 198.5p
A NEW management team is transforming Clydeport, the Glasgow-based ports group. The market has already begun to

THE FUND MANAGERS

recognise its strong forward earnings momentum, based mainly on rising coal imports through its efficient port facility on the West coast of Scotland. In addition, property development could yield substantial benefits. The balance sheet contains net cash and the business is strongly cash-generative.

The shares do not deserve to stand on a discount of 20-30 per cent to their counterparts in the ports sub-sector, implying considerable upside potential.

Vanessa James, Legal & General

Tip: MMT Computing 937.5p
SINCE MMT floated in 1983 it has generated annualised profits of 27 per cent. It is involved in computer systems consultancy and software facilities management. The company has a blue-chip client base in retail, health and the financial sectors, often obtaining preferred-supplier status with its key clients.

Currently, MMT is benefiting from Year 2000 millennium bug work and from preparations for the euro, but we are convinced that its established client base will provide sufficient projects to fuel demand post this bubble. The bulk of contracts are undertaken on a time and materials basis, reducing contractual risk, and are staffed by MMT personnel, so producing higher margins than companies reliant on self-employed contractors.

Earnings are expected to grow by 45 per cent in the year just gone, reducing to 22 per cent in 1999, yet this company is rated below the market. MMT has been wrongly compared with the IT staffing companies, ignoring its greater visibility of forward earnings. Also, it is a small company and has suffered with the derating in this area. We believe 1999 should be the year to correct this.

Tom Crombie, Scottish Equitable

Tip: Next 494p.

IT IS SURPRISING how many cheap stocks there are in the market just now. A private investor can find many shares in unattractive sectors with high yields and low P/Es. Of course, it is important to choose companies where profits are not going to disappear because of the economic slowdown or overseas competition.

My choice for 1999 is Next. It is a well-known, quality, high-street retailer of fashionable clothes. It made a mistake in its merchandising last year and sales and profits have suffered as a result. Retailing is out of favour in the stock mar-

ket just now because of the slowdown in spending and high-profile problems at M&S.

I think Next is cheap on a 5.5 per cent yield and 11 times price/earnings multiple. The yield is almost 1 per cent higher than you get on long gilts. Expectations are low and the outlook could improve if interest rates fall below 5 per cent next year. The stock market will anticipate a recovery in consumer spending when monetary policy is eased further. The retail sector could do well and Next could do even better if it sorts out its merchandising problems.

Colin McLean, Scottish Value Management

Tip: Shanks & McEwan 210.5p.

MY SHARE TIP for 1999 is a company that performed well in 1998, despite a weak background for medium-sized companies. The waste management business Shanks & McEwan Group has made steady progress over the past three years, yet still remains substantially undervalued. It operates a range of waste collection and landfill activities. With a market capitalisation of £400m, it is now a substantial business, and has recently moved into Europe. Utilities aiming to diversify have been buying into waste management, and recent takeover prices would value Shanks & McEwan substantially higher than its current share price.

Graham Wood, Standard Life Investments

Tip: Imperial Tobacco 644p.
THIS YEAR will be characterised by fears over economic growth and possible price deflation as markets wait for interest rate cuts to take effect.

Imperial Tobacco is substantially cheaper than the market average, both in yield and in P/E terms. Its earnings are forecast to show double-digit growth and this forecast should be resilient against a background where economic and profits growth forecasts are generally being cut. This makes it an attractive stock for 1999.

Robert Talbot, Royal & Sun Alliance

Tip: BAA.

THE EXTREMELY challenging background against which we expect companies to be operating predicates our selection for 1999. We expect that inflation will stay very low and be accompanied by a disappointing growth out-turn.

BAA is rightly perceived as exhibiting a relatively defensive earnings stream, relating largely, as it does, to aircraft movements. While the global macroeconomic background next year is unlikely to be helpful, we still believe in the longer-term dynamics of growth in air travel. Even though BAA is still to some extent a regulated business this is becoming less significant in group terms.

The particular positive surprise that may emerge in the new year would be the delay in abolition of EU duty-free. While this would provide an added kicker to medium term valuations we remain comfortable that the company can build upon its recent relative gains, in what promises to be a difficult investment environment.



Class 6b at King Alfred's School in London picked a portfolio of shares and gave some intriguing reasons for their choices

Picking share winners is child's play

ELLEN HARRISON			
How she performed in 1998			
	Tipped at	Price now	%Gain/Loss
Filtronic	442.5p	602.5p	+34
Fizewit	40p	50p	+25
Ezerca	213.7p	261.7p	+22
Nycomed Amersham	377p	414p	+10
Signet	30p	312.5p	+4
Newcastle United	94.5p	97p	+3
Bodycote	903.5p	832.5p	-8
Groupe Chex Gerard	282.5p	222p	-21
Carpetright	445p	224	-50
Peptide Therapeutics	266.5p	81.5p	-69
Average			-4.8
FT All Share	2411	2673.9	+10.9
FTSE 100	5135.5	5882.6	+14.5

* Adjusted for sub-for-one share split
** Accepted 50p cash bid from Irish rival Stoneworth in May

A YEAR AGO we asked Ellen Harrison, the five-and-a-half year old daughter of our Deputy Business and City Editor, to choose 10 stocks at random from our share price pages. This "alternative" method of stock selection resulted in one or two heavy gains, but a couple of disappointments dragged the portfolio down to a 6 per cent fall on average.

Best performer was Filtronic, which makes components for mobile phone base stations. The strength of the telecoms sector pushed the shares 36 per cent higher. Problem stocks included

Carpetright, hit by weakening consumer spending, and Peptide Therapeutics, the biotech company which fell from favour.

This year we have opted for a slightly more sophisticated approach than sticking a pin in the paper. The class of 6b (10 and 11 year olds) at King Alfred's School in London - which includes the son of *The Independent's* Business and City Editor - was asked to select a portfolio of 10 shares, giving reasons in each case. Here they are.

Capital Radio, radio seems like a good business to be in. Ocean Group, liked the name. British Polythene Industries,

because it has a good yield. British Steel, likewise because it makes steel. Havelock Europa, no reason given. United Biscuits, because people like to eat biscuits. Vodafone, because the class mistook the p/e for the yield, which at 60 is indeed impressively high, but also because the mobile phone boom is expected to gather pace. Soco International, a play on the oil price, which is expected to recover. Independent Newspapers, because it publishes *The Independent*. Stoves Group, no reason given but presumably to anticipate an upturn in spending on household goods.

No cure for summertime blues

THE INDEPENDENT's share tips for 1998 bear the scars that afflicted the whole market. Though the FTSE 100 eventually rallied after its summertime blues to show a 14.5 per cent gain, the recovery was based on the rampant performance of one or two star sectors which skewed the whole index.

Most of our tips were from outside the blue chips, where stocks remained unloved. There were some notable exceptions, however. WS Atkins, the engineering and consulting group, finished the year strongly after calling off merger talks with P&O's Bovis Homes subsidiary.

Chorion, the former Trocadero group, also looked along merrily after picking up the rights to the Noddy and Big Ears books. And Eurotunnel, that perennial under-achiever, turned in a solid performance on the back of improving passenger figures and its first "profit" following a debt restructuring.

At the bottom of the league, Tamaris, the nursing home company, looked sickly. Northern Leisure, the nightclub operator, called off takeover talks in the spring and the downturn in consumer spending hit it hard.

But the logic of some of the tips remains intact. Readers who bought BSKYB should hang on as the stock still looks under-valued. And BTR was

OUR STAFF TIPS

tipped on the basis that if things continued to slide it would fall to a takeover. It did, but the merger with Siebe only emerged after the stock had fallen further than expected.

This year is likely to be difficult. Growth stocks will be few and far between as fear persists about weak consumer spending, price deflation and weak economic growth. For that reason the best course of action when considering FTSE 100 stocks, is to look for recovery potential.

For that reason we like the look of Bass (881.5p). Shares in Britain's biggest brewer are well below their peak of 1175p in the spring. It has been hit by fears over consumer spending but its purchase of Intercontinental Hotels offers more balance and its portfolio of drink and pub brands such as All Bar One, is among the strongest.

In retailing, the super-markets look undervalued and Asda (161.5p) is trading at a discount to the sector. The shares are around 30 per cent lower than their 1998 peak.

Barclays Bank (1296p) may be worth a punt after its recent woes. Despite Martin Taylor's

surprise exit from the chief executive's hot seat a couple of months ago, the basic high-street banking business remains in good shape. The shares have rebounded from their 838p level in October but are still well down on their 1946p peak and trading at a considerable discount to rivals.

Outside Footsie, another recovery stock is Churchill China (87.5p), the specialist manufacturer of tableware. The strength of sterling has depressed export prices, and the Asian crisis wiped out sales in Korea and the Pacific Rim, while frustrated exports have depressed prices on the home market. But the company is unpegged and its technical problems have been virtually solved.

Seton Scholl Healthcare (837.5p) looks like a safe bet. The group, formed by merger of Scholl, the maker of the famous medical sandals, and Seton, the over-the-counter drug specialist, is one of the leading healthcare players in the UK and continental Europe. These two markets are expected to buck the gloomy economic outlook and grow by around 8-10 per cent for the next few years.

Hanson (477.5p) is a solid rock in the crumbling building materials sector. Unlike its unfancied peers, the rump of Lord Hanson's empire is less vulnerable to the UK economic slump. After an aggressive spending spree on bolt-on buys, over half of Hanson's profits come from the US, which is on

the verge of a boom thanks to a \$216bn government road-building programme.

Support services could do well this year as contracting-out is more popular in downturns. Skills Group (181.5p), is shifting from low-margin distribution to more lucrative computer services, but has yet to reap the benefits in share price terms. The group has net cash of £33m to fund bolt-on acquisitions and with a forward multiple of just 12, a re-rating looks overdue.

DCC (530p), the Irish industrial holding company, has an odd mix of businesses in healthcare, food, energy and computer distribution. But it has proved a successful combination and its "localisation" business, which adapts computer software for European and Asian markets, is booming. Analysts are impressed with the company's progressive management, and good acquisition record.

For a play on the explosive growth potential of the Internet, investors with strong stomachs should have a look at Zergo. Two weeks ago the firm became the world's second-largest supplier of security software, which allows people to trade safely on the Internet, when it merged with its Irish rival, Baltimore, in a £33m deal. Not for widows and orphans, but worth a punt.

FUND MANAGERS			
How they performed in 1998			
	Tipped at	Price now	%Gain/Loss
British Energy	423p	687p	+62
Unilever	521p	674p	+29
First Choice	100p	122.5p	+22.5
EMI	508p	402p	-21
Wolseley	483p	380p	-21
Ockham Holdings	104.5p	76.5p	-27
British Airways	560p	405.25p	-28
Average			+2
FT All Share	2411	2673.9	+10.9
FTSE 100	5135.5	5882.6	+14.5

* Agreed £77m merger with Lloyd's underwriter New London Capital on 9th December.

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SPORT

The year ahead: Chelsea for the title; England to win the World Cup? Independent writers play the prediction game ... and here are the headlines for 1999

FOOTBALL

BY GLENN MOORE

HAVING BEEN the final champions of the 19th century, and the first of this, Aston Villa hope to achieve a remarkable treble in May with the closing title of the millennium. Resilient with a touch of flair and overwhelmingly English, the modern Villa would be worthy winners, but they face far more exotic competition than their illustrious predecessors.

Manchester United, Arsenal and Chelsea (known in 1900 as Newton Heath, Woolwich Arsenal or, in Chelsea's case, yet to be formed) are the main challengers, with Chelsea, in particular, having just a smattering of Englishmen. But they have already disproved the old xenophobic clichés about foreign players fading in winter and causing disruption in the dressing-room and, with Manchester United distracted by Europe – probably in vain again – and Arsenal short of goals, this could be Chelsea's year.

Much may depend on how quickly, and how well, Gustavo Poyet, a prospective footballer of the year, recovers from injury but Chelsea have already shown they have strength in depth. Lazio, however, may deny them a European Cup-Winners' Cup double.

The usual contenders will be in the frame for the FA Cup, with Liverpool and Tottenham joining the aforementioned quartet. Middlesbrough, West Ham and Leeds are prospective dark horses. Spurs, blending the cup-fighting traditions of both club and manager, may emerge the winners.

In the Worthington Cup, it would be nice to see Joe Kinnear finally earn reward for his efforts at Wimbledon. Spurs beat the way in the semi-final, Sunderland or Leicester in the final.

Sunderland would be amply compensated with the First Division championship. Birmingham should go up with them while an East Anglian derby would make a fitting play-off final.

The promoted trio's task is likely to be underlined by the rapid return of Nottingham Forest and Charlton Athletic, with Coventry or Southampton going down with them. North of the border, Rangers should hold off Kilmarnock's brave challenge.

RUGBY UNION

BY CHRIS HEWETT

ACCORDING TO proponents of the more apocalyptic religious faiths, we will all be dead by the end of 1999. On the basis that they may conceivably have to wait a very long time – an eternity, indeed – for another shot at the golden pot, it would be as well for England to win the World Cup at the next available opportunity, which just happens to present itself this coming autumn. Can they succeed? Yes, they can. Will they succeed? Er, probably not.

The suspicion must be that Clive Woodward's side will require too many big performances – more than one, that is – in too tight a timespan to go the whole hog. New Zealand and those notable non-pushovers from Italy are already confirmed as pool opponents and Tonga also enter the English equation if, as expected, they win the qualifying repechage. It is, without question, the most competitive of the groups and the damage it causes will probably leave either South Africa or Australia laughing all the way to the title.

On the face of it, England ought to find the final Five Nations' Championship much more to their liking, if only because the French must travel to Twickenham. However, there is a very real prospect of a seriously combative tournament this time around. Wales, Scotland and Ireland all had their moments against the Springboks recently and if they are still too dependant on the 'if only' theory of rugby to lend legitimacy to talk of a Celtic renaissance, they are not beyond upsetting a few apples. The Irish welcome both England and France to Lansdowne Road, so hold on to our hats.

Leicester will never have a better chance of winning the Premiership; neither Northampton nor Newcastle possess sufficient all-round pace to sustain a challenge into April and May and although the three big London powers – Wasps, Saracens and Harlequins – are comfortably quick enough, the Cup is a more realistic target for each.

SPORT
Chelsea the championsSPORT
Faldo storms to US Open

A triumph for Mr Persistence

SPORT
Rusedski is crowned at WimbledonSPORT
Schumacher king of the road again

A steering job for the prancing horse



GOLF

BY ANDY FARRELL

TO SAN DIEGO in February for the inaugural World Matchplay Championship, where Nick Faldo, as the 64th player on the rankings, will scrape into the tournament and the beat world No 1 Tiger Woods, in the opening round. But Lee Westwood will continue his winning spree by taking his biggest title to date.

Augusta, April, and that rite of spring that is the US Masters. Woods will reclaim what is rightfully his with another overpowering performance on Bobby Jones' masterpiece. In an emotional finale, Seve Ballesteros wins for the first time in four years at the PGA Championship, on his beloved West Course at Wentworth.

More turning back the clock at the US Open in June at the fabled Pinehurst No 2 course, where Faldo wins his seventh major after an 18-hole play-off with David Duval. A month later, Ernie Els battles Jose Maria Olazabal for the 128th Open Championship at Carnoustie, before the South African takes the title for the first time and his third major.

In Chicago in August, the long wait finally ends for Colin Montgomerie at the US Open-style Medinah. America continue to mess up the foursomes and fourballs at Brookline in September, but overwhelm Europe in the singles to win the Ryder Cup for the first time since 1993. Westwood wins the Order of Merit, ending Monty's six-year reign, and moves to No 2 in the world behind Woods.

Player of the year: Sergio Garcia. The 18-year-old finishes fifth as an amateur at the Masters, turns pro and wins the Turespaña Masters and the Deutsche Bank Open, qualifies for the Ryder Cup and partners Olazabal to three points out of four, before halving with Woods in the singles.

ATHLETICS

BY MIKE ROWBOTTOM

HAVING CLEANED up at the European Championships and the Commonwealth Games, Britain's athletes face the more stringent test of a global event this season, in the form of the International Amateur Athletics Federation World Championships in Seville.

Marion Jones, the US sprinter who won all 21 of her races last season, is likely to contest four world titles, the 100m, 200m, the sprint relay and the long jump.

Jones, who won a third share of the \$1m (£609,750) on offer to those athletes completing the IAAF Golden League sequence unbeaten, could claim the whole amount for herself in the designated 200m event.

The two outstanding world male athletes, Haile Gebrselassie of Ethiopia and Hicham El Guerrouj of Morocco, have not had their best events included in next season's schedule, and could give Jones a clear run as they concentrate on maintaining their grip on the middle distances. Daniel Komen of Kenya is the man capable of pushing Gebrselassie at 5,000m and 10,000m.

The World Championships offer Britain's European and Commonwealth heptathlon gold medalist, Denise Lewis, the chance to underline her position as No 1, while Jonathan Edwards and Asafa Powell could make it a British double in the triple jump.

How close will Iwan Thomas, the Commonwealth, European and World Cup 400m champion, get to the Olympic and world title-holder, Michael Johnson? Or will Mark Richardson realise his full potential over one lap? The London Marathon, on 18 April, also promises performances to remember as the Irish title-holder, Catherine McKiernan, takes on the Olympic 10,000m champion, Fernanda Ribeiro of Portugal, who is due to run her first marathon.

CRICKET

BY DEREK PRINGLE

THE 1999 season will be the last before a two-divisional Championship attempts to take English cricket into the new millennium. The World Cup, cricket's prestigious four-yearly competition will also be held, albeit in May, when English pitches are at their most xenophobic.

After the World Cup, New Zealand tour here, while, later in the year, England travel to South Africa for a five-Test series.

Predicting what might happen, particularly where England are concerned, is always a hazardous business, but here goes.

Alec Stewart sees the millennium out as England captain. Michael Atherton is dropped from the team, then comes back to open the batting against Allan Donald for the Johannesburg Test. Selectors cite "horses for courses" as the reason for his comeback.

England's run in the World Cup is ended by South Africa, who lose to Australia in the final. Kenya manage to beat two Test-playing countries in the opening rounds.

Lord MacLaurin opens the first supermarket on a ground formerly used for first-class cricket. Meanwhile, Bryan Young, New Zealand's opening batsman, ensures the first over of the summer's Test series is a maiden.

Leicestershire win their third Championship in four years. In the headlong rush to finish in the top division, 12 counties are docked 25 points each for sub-standard pitches. Harry Brind, the England and Wales Cricket Board's pitch inspector, learns to pilot his own helicopter, such is his workload.

In a bid to make lady members feel at home, the MCC brings in a bulk consignment of pink toilet paper. Unfortunately, no loos have been built to accommodate it, and the surplus is used by groundstaff to mop up the ground after the hover-cover runs amok down St John's Wood High Street.

BOXING

BY KEN JONES

IF MIKE TYSON'S return to the ring against Franz Botha in Las Vegas on the 16th of this month dominates the boxing calendar, it cannot divert all attention from a contest between Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis to unify the heavyweight championship.

Scheduled for 13 March, appropriately at boxing's most famous arena, Madison Square Garden in New York, it will be the sport's biggest event there since March 1971, when Joe Frazier and Muhammad Ali squared up for the undisputed heavyweight title.

Various imponderables, however, make it unlikely that either man will have an edge in the betting when they are summoned to their corners.

Holyfield, who is putting up the World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation belts against that of the World Boxing Council held by Lewis, must run an increasing risk with the erosion of time.

Lewis is the heavier puncher but none the less, doubts exist about his ability to overcome Holyfield's superior technique and handle the rough in-fighting that caused Tyson to lose his head and his boxing licence.

Unification of the heavyweight championship, however temporarily, will restore some sense to a sport beset by a ludicrous proliferation of international bodies and often phoney titles.

Tyson's reappearance after a 15-month suspension imposed by the Nevada State Commission for biting a chunk out of Holyfield's right ear is more of an event than a contest.

Botha is a cut above the hapless Peter McNeeley, who was served up to the former champion after his parole following three years in prison on a rape conviction, but, unless Tyson is completely shot, it ought to be a difficult task for him.

MOTOR RACING

BY DERICK ALLSOP

FORMULA ONE fans were parted from their sport demanding more of the same next season and the chances are they will be obliged.

The jostling for position in the pack could be just as intriguing and Jordan, having muscled past Benetton, are intent on challenging Williams for third place in the constructors' standings. It seems likely, however, that McLaren, Mercedes and Ferrari will again corner the main event. The Italians are even more anxious to acclaim their first champion since 1979 after Michael Schumacher's latest near miss.

David Coulthard is no less determined to stake a claim this time, following the success of his McLaren team-mate, Mika Hakkinen. The Scot must reckon a fulfilled Hakkinen will have difficulty motivating himself to the same extent. Coulthard may also feel he is entitled to a little pay-back in recognition of his selfless support in 1998.

That would leave him with the small matter of fending off Schumacher, and if the Ferrari is improved to near enough the standard of the McLaren, then Coulthard will be confronting a monumental task. Schumacher remains the pre-eminent driver in grand prix racing. For the past two seasons he has been the saviour of Formula One, pushing superior cars to the wire. His third title is overdue.

Individually, Reutemann and Rusedski are determined to challenge Sampras for the No 1 position and to win a Grand Slam singles title. Sampras, with 11 Grand Slam singles titles to his name, seeks two more to overtake the record held by Australian's Roy Emerson.

Steffi Graf, 30 next June, continues her latest comeback from injury. Prediction: Rusedski to win the Wimbledon men's singles title.

YOU DO not need to be Nostalgicus to appreciate that Commander Collins is unlikely to see out the trip in the Derby in June, even though he is currently no better than 8-1 to win the premier Classic. His dam won the Breeders' Cup Sprint, and his close relative Colonel Collins clearly did not stay when third to Erhaab in the Derby of 1994.

Yet a Classic could still come his way this year, particularly if there is some cut in the ground at Newmarket on 2,000 Guineas day. Similar conditions proved ideal in the Racing Post Trophy in October, and all the best judges reckoned he would improve significantly from two to three.

Nor will there be any need to consult runes or tea leaves for

TENNIS

BY JOHN ROBERTS

PROVIDED TIM HENMAN and Greg Rusedski are fit, healthy and in good form, Britain ought to give the United States a keen contest in the first round of the Davis Cup World Group at Birmingham's National Indoor Arena at Easter.

David Lloyd, Britain's captain, can rely on the support of his two leading players, while his American counterpart, Tom Gullikson, has to plan without Pete Sampras, the world No 1, if not Andre Agassi, the world No 6.

However, there is no depth to Lloyd's squad, whereas Gullikson can call on the experience of Todd Martin and the vitality of Jan-Michael Gambill even before delving for other options, such as Vince Spadea, Justin Gimelstob and – dare we say it – Jeff Tarango.

If Britain win, the second round will bring a journey to Australia or Zimbabwe, on 16-18 July.

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RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

IT HAS been said it before and might have to be said again, but this really should be the season when Leeds make the breakthrough. It is long enough since the club won major honours to make Manchester City's wait for a winning team look like a brief depression, but Leeds now look ready.

They had the measure of Wigan in the regular season last time and only lost out to their great rivals on superior know-how in the play-offs. They were outstandingly well coached and their players will have learnt a great deal from their near miss in 1998.

On top of a couple of key signings to strengthen their squad in Lee Jackson and Karl Pratt, Leeds have the best under-19s in the game. Throw in a bigger contribution from Barrie McDermott and the resources available to Graham Murray start to look formidable.

Against that, Wigan, still Leeds' logical stumbling block, look a little thin in some positions. Considering how little there was between the two sides last season, the balance could tilt sufficiently this time.

So there you have it: Leeds to win Super League, pursued by Wigan, St Helens and Bradford. Gateshead to be respectable, but Wakefield to founder, and do not expect Sheffield Eagles to give up the Challenge Cup without an almighty fight.

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news of his well-being, since, unlike the Godolphin string, he is prepared in Britain for owners who like a bet. The ante-post market will reflect his health as reliably as a blood test.

Although he ran in Robert Sangster's blue-and-green silks last season, Commander Collins is now part-owned by John Magnier, which probably kept him from the clutches of Sheikh Mohammed's

Godolphin operation. Another part-owner is Tony Collins, who was "warned off" the turf for several years for his part in the notorious Gay Future betting coup.

Collins, apparently, did not make a penny from the coup, which involved all manner of highly imaginative plotting. The horse which bears his name, on the other hand, should enjoy a very profitable season indeed.

RACING

BY GREG WOOD

THIS year, particularly if there is some cut in the ground at Newmarket on 2,000 Guineas day. Similar conditions proved ideal in the Racing Post Trophy in October, and all the best judges reckoned he would improve significantly from two to three.

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Ryan set to join Bristol's revival

DEAN RYAN, the former England No 8 who has fought more battles on the rugby field than he ever managed as a career soldier, yesterday emerged as the clear favourite to replace his old rival David Egeon as Bristol's forwards coach. If the 32-year-old Newcastle captain completes his expected move next week, the West Countrymen will be able to boast the most potent backroom team in the English game.

Bob Dwyer, the World Cup-winning Australian coach, and Jack Rowell, the former England coach who masterminded a decade of unparalleled success at neighbouring Bath, are already in place at the Memorial Ground, as is Darryl Jones, the backs specialist from Neath. Dwyer, very much the driving force behind Bristol's surge to the top of Allied Dunbar Premiership Two, sees Ryan as the last piece in his training ground jigsaw.

"As far as I know, Newcastle have not yet agreed to release Dean: negotiations are continuing and I hope to make an announcement next week," Dwyer said yesterday. "Because we are a new team, we do not have an excess of leaders. By virtue of his stature as a player and as a leader, Ryan would be an important addition." There was not so much as a murmur from Newcastle. However, Kingston Park officials were privately resigned to Ryan's departure.

Ryan joined Newcastle from Wasps a little over three years ago, teaming up with two old club-mates, Rob Andrew and Steve Bates, to reinvent the Falcons as a state-of-the-art professional outfit. The project was a phenomenal triumph - Newcastle won promotion to the top flight in 1997 before winning the Allied Dunbar title at their first attempt last May - and while Andrew, as director of rugby, was undeniably the architect, his captain was the master mason. An unexpected by-product of his autumnal success came last March, when he was recalled to the England side for the Calcutta Cup match in Scotland, his first international appearance in six years.

Last month, though, Ryan entered hospital for an operation on his

RUGBY UNION

BY CHRIS HEWETT

neck and was advised by specialists that he would miss the remainder of the season. Newcastle's apparent reluctance to extend his playing contract - they want him to concentrate on coaching - is almost certainly a major factor behind his decision to talk to Bristol, who will encourage him to continue his active career.

If the Memorial Grounders finally get their man, it will be another feather in the cap of Malcolm Pearce, the millionaire businessman and self-confessed rugby nut who bought the club out of receivership during the summer. Pearce's money has allowed Dwyer to make a fistful of influential acquisitions.

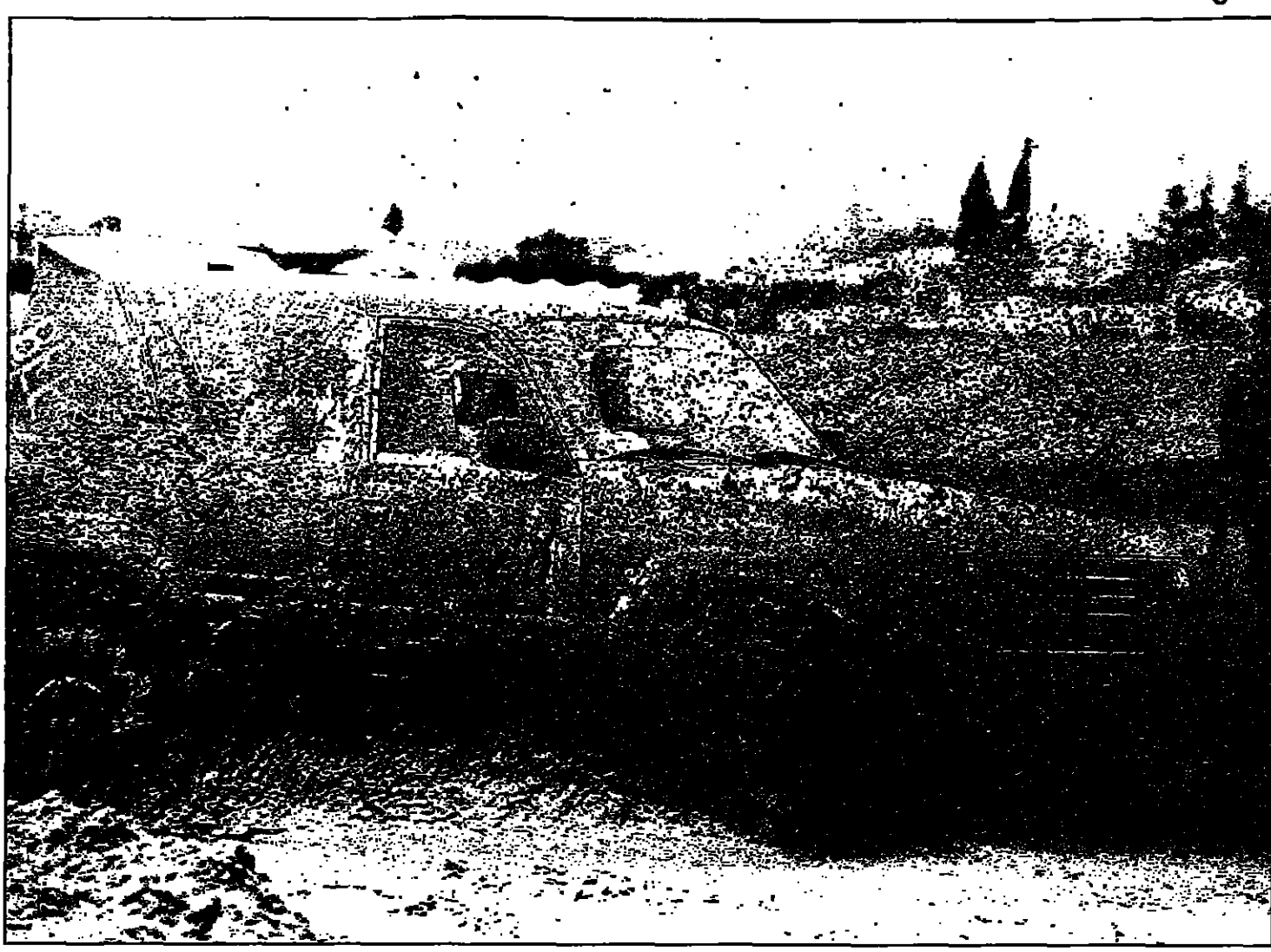
Ulster intend to expand the capacity of their Ravenhill stadium to 20,000 for the European Cup semi-final with Stade Français tomorrow week.

"The organisers of the tournament were keen to maximise the attendance and by erecting temporary stands and using all the available space, we've managed to comply with their wishes," Michael Reid, the Ulster chief executive, said. "We've already shifted more than 14,000 tickets and we're pretty certain of pulling in a full house for the game."

The Irishmen originally wanted to play the game under lights next Friday night, but the French favourites were having none of it: an understandable reaction in the light of the starting indignities suffered by Toulouse in recent weeks. Ulster beat the 1996 champions twice in quick succession, once in a pool match and then in an explosive quarter-final.

"I think we'd have preferred to stick with the tried and trusted Friday routine," Reid admitted. "We've attracted some fantastic support throughout the tournament and the special atmosphere of a big game under lights has definitely been a contributory factor. Still, we're committed to the Saturday kick-off now and once we pack the crowd in and get a few drums banging, we'll give Stade Français something to think about."

Mud flies on the drive to dominate Dakar Rally



The Belgian, Andreas Vanierschot, drives his Toyota through the mud during the prologue of the Dakar Rally at the Amilla airbase near Granada, Spain, yesterday. The 19-day rally begins in earnest from the Moroccan capital, Rabat, today

Florimo arrives to boost Wigan

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

GREG FLORIMO has arrived in Britain to add his vast experience to Wigan's cause, but he may not be the final piece in John Monie's jigsaw for the 1999 season.

Florimo, the 31-year-old North Sydney stand-off or back-row forward, is the replacement for Henry Paul, who has joined Bradford - a move that has not been welcomed by all Wigan fans.

"He's a good player and a hard act to follow," Florimo said. "All I can promise the fans is that I'm not here for a holiday and I'll be giving 110 per cent to try to make Wigan as successful, if not more so."

Florimo, regarded as a model professional in Australia, will start pre-season training with his new team-mates next week. "I can't wait to get started," he said. "It will seem strange at first after 13 years at Norths. I couldn't have played for another team in Australia and I enjoyed it in England when I was here with Australia in 1994."

Florimo has signed a two-year contract with Wigan and could soon be joined by another Australian, as Monie is widely expected to return to Britain this weekend with the signature of Brett Kimmorley.

The Melbourne Storm scrum-half, who played for the Hunter Mariners in the World Club Championship against Wigan in 1997, can also play hooker and is seen as a player who can cover two departments in which the Wigan squad could be over-stretched.

Tony Smith is the only experienced scrum-half on the books, while Jon Clarke, the first-choice hooker following the departure of Robbie McCormack, faces a court appearance in the New Year.

The Halifax prop-forward, Richard Marshall, has agreed a new, two-year contract with the club. Marshall was wanted by the Super League newcomers, Wakefield Trinity, but the Halifax winger, David Hobbs, said he had always been confident that he would stay at The Shay.

Marshall is now in line to play in today's match at Huddersfield, who are expected to give first outings to their own new signings - Jim Lenihan, Andrew Tangata-Toa, Ian Pickavance and John Bentley.

Salford have signed the South African winger Mark Johnson from Hull after losing Darren Rogers to Castleford and Phil Coussons to Rochdale.

Lewis on the road

BOXING

THE LENNOX Lewis-Evander Holyfield roadshow looks likely to arrive in Europe during mid-January as yet another hectic leg of Frank Maloney's schedule.

Lewis and Holyfield are set to hard-sell their heavyweight title unification showdown, scheduled for 13 March, with press conferences in London, Paris and Germany this month, and will be accompanied by the promoter, Don King. This follows a whistle-stop tour of America, during which the mega-bout was officially announced last month.

Maloney, Lewis's manager, has recently won the European Boxing Union's "title" as Promoter of the Year. And, true to form, he still has several other shows to promote prior to the Lewis-Holyfield fight in New York, in addition to organising the World Boxing Council champion's training camp in the Pocono Hills, Pennsylvania.

Race dispute mars Test

CRICKET

BY KIERAN DALEY

STEVE TSHWETE, South Africa's Sports minister, has criticised his country's cricket selectors for snubbing black players in the squad for the fourth Test against the West Indies, which starts in Cape Town tomorrow.

Tshwete is annoyed that, with South Africa 3-0 up in a five Test series, no attempt has been made to experiment with emerging talent to balance a white-dominated side. "This was a good opportunity to let a talented youngster have a chance to play," he said.

Tshwete claimed the repeated exclusion of black players from the national side was denying them the chance to improve skills and gain experience. Ali Bacher, the managing director of the United Cricket Board (UCB), said he was disappointed by Tshwete's comments. He was planning to challenge the minister when the pair attended a black cricket tournament in the Eastern Cape town of Port Beaufort yesterday.

"The politicians must have confidence in us," Bacher said. For him and his fellow cricket adminis-

trators, recent criticism has come as a shock. Previously, cricket was hailed as a model sport because of its commitment to black development. Tshwete himself chaired the talks between rival black and white cricket bodies which led to the formation of the UCB in 1991.

A picture of Tshwete shedding tears of joy as he hugged the batsman Peter Kirsten after South Africa had beaten the champions, Australia, in their first World Cup match in Sydney in 1992 epitomised cricket's status as a unifying force in the new South Africa. Ironically, at the time it was an all-white team with no player of colour anywhere near contention for a place in the side.

In the past year, though, four coloured or black cricketers have represented the country, including the fast bowler Makhaya Ntini, the first black African to play Test cricket for South Africa. The mixed-race men Herschelle Gibbs and Paul

Adams have also played in Tests and have both been selected for tomorrow's Test. Roger Telemachus, another coloured player, has played in one-day internationals.

National age group teams have become racially mixed, with an average of about 40 per cent black players. Thami Tsolekile, a black African from Cape Town, will captain the South African Under-19 team on a tour of Pakistan this month.

Early last year the UCB drew up guidelines for the national selectors, who were told they should include players of colour in national teams. A monitoring committee was set up with the power to request the selectors to think again, or when a series was already decided, to direct them to pick players of colour.

The monitoring committee approved the team for tomorrow's Test but this did not satisfy Tshwete or his fellow African National Congress politician, Muleki George, the chairman of the National Sports Council. "The time is drawing near when we will have to take action," George said.

SPORTS LETTERS

Post letters to Sports Desk at 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number. Faxes to 0171 293 2834 or e-mail to sport@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondence are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Coaches to blame, not the players

Sir: In the weeks after Manchester United relied on favourable results elsewhere to progress in Europe, is it not about time that the real culprits stood up to be counted and took the blame for British football's inability to achieve lasting success at European club and international level?

I refer to the coaches and managers in this country who have failed time and time again to do justice to the players and supporters. If Celta Vigo's triumph over Liverpool does nothing else, surely the overwhelming defeat by this relative pauper (most expensive player £1.25m) should at least tell Liverpool it is how they are doing it that is wrong, not who they have. British playing talent is as good as any in the world, it just needs decent coaches. There are

a few - Steve Harrison consistently proves his ability - and Aston Villa have outperformed nearly everyone this season with a team of British journeymen. Clough rarely spent big money on players but made silk purses out of the likes of players like McGovern, Burns, O'Hare and Robertson.

When you have David Platt as a "Director of Football" seemingly acknowledged as a guru, perhaps you should pay some attention to the things he says - he talks of Edgar Davids as a good box-to-box player who gets his foot in and Kluitert as a man with a good engine. I think he is

missing the point, or betraying that his focus is narrow, unimaginative and way off-beam - along with too many British colleagues.

NIGEL CUBBAGE
Markyate, Herts

Whip free new year

Sir: Alison Maskell (*Letters*, 2 December) nicks my plea for the whip to be banned. She rests her case on "leave it to the professionals." Are these the same professionals who keep being banned for improper use of the whip?

However, it is heartening that soon there will be experiments in

whipless races. I feel an end to cruelty to race horses might come early in the 21st century. And what will the professionals do then?

My wife and I had a grand day at Kelso recently. Very few whips in use on ground which took everything out of jockeys and horses. Yes, it can be done.

JIM BRUNTON
Edinburgh

Home Office threat to the independents

Sir: What on earth can the Home Office be thinking of concerning

the re-constitution of The Bookmakers Committee to the Levy Board? This statutory body is responsible for recommending a levy for bookmakers to support racing. The committee is evenly divided between the larger concerns and the smaller operators and the balance ensures the survival of the latter.

The Home Office is proposing to give Ladbrokes two seats, William Hill two seats, Coral two seats, British Office Licenses Association (which the Big Three control) two seats, and four seats to the independents. You would not have to be a rocket scientist to

see the Home Office is giving Big Three bookmakers power to achieve whatever they would wish to on horse race levy matters.

What is perhaps surprising is the different views various government departments take on the issues relating to betting. Recently the Department of Trade and Industry upheld the Monopolies and Mergers Commission decision on the Ladbrokes takeover of Coral. It gave a clear message that government now had an aggressive competition policy. However, we now find that the big bookmakers have found another route to exploit through the

Home Office. What they have lost at the DTTI, they will now gain at the Home Office. What a farce.

You might ask how this ludicrous state of affairs has come about. Our view is that it has been caused by the British Horseracing Board's silly demand for the levy to rise nearly two-and-a-half times and the Home Office's stated reluctance to determine the dispute if agreement between bookmakers and racing cannot be reached.

It is ironic that small bookmaker in rural areas who provide the public with the legal opportunity to bet is likely to suffer because of greed on the part of racing, a lack of responsibility in government, not to mention the Big Three bookmakers who are striving to achieve a complete oligopoly.

WARWICK BARTLETT
Chairman British Betting Office Association Ltd

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BASKETBALL

UNIBAL TROPHY: Leicester Riders 93 Derby Storm 90 (90 min)

GROUP A

Sheffield Sharks	P	W	L	Pts
Leicester Riders	6	1	12	6
Derby Storm	4	2	8	8
Leicester Riders	3	2	6	6
Leicester Riders	3	2	6	6
Leicester Riders	3	2	6	6
Leicester Riders	3	2	6	6
Leicester Riders	3	2	6	6

GROUP B

London Towers	P	W	L	Pts
Birmingham Bulls	3	2	4	6
Newcastle Eagles	2	2	4	4
Derby Storm	1	0	1	0
Edinburgh Rocks	0	0	0	0

DARTS

SNOW PDC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (Continental, Palford) Second round: J. Taylor (Eng) 6-0 M. Van den Bergh (Bel) 3-2; P. Taylor (Eng) 6-1 L. Lowe (Eng) 3-1; B. Anderson (Eng) 6-1; H. Van den Bergh (Bel) 3-2.

FOOTBALL

John Collins, the Everton playmaker, could be ruled out for two months after being forced to admit defeat in a long-running battle against a toe injury. The Scotland international is booked in for an operation early next week, although he could still play some part in Everton's FA Cup tie with Bristol City tomorrow. "I have required an operation for a few months," Collins said. "I tried to play on with pain but my form has dipped and I am disappointed with that. The specialist said it will be six to eight weeks, which is a long time and something I have not had to cope with in my career." Collins hopes the operation will enable him to return with his best form for the last three months of Everton's season.

ICE HOCKEY

SECONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Manchester 1 Newcastle 0.

NHL: Ottawa 3 Buffalo 2 (ot); Carolina 4 Tampa Bay 3; New Jersey 5 Washington 2; Pittsburgh 7 Florida 4; Toronto 4 Anaheim 1; Boston 5 Nashville 2; Phoenix 3 NY Rangers 1; Los Angeles 5 San Jose 1.

FOOTBALL

Italy's Giovanni Sordani is expected in Auckland today to win in his 60th. He is the second leg of the Around Alone race from Cape Town. He had a near 200-mile lead over a very tired Mike Golding, whose team Group 4 may take a further 24 hours. But, in turn, he has more than 250 miles on the Frenchman, Marc Thiercelier, who now has his compatriot, Isabelle Audisier, just 13 miles ahead. That should mean the overall standings at the half-way point will remain the same. Golding increasing his lead over Thiercelier, Thiercelier slipping a little, Sordani reducing his five-day deficit by 24 hours. Josh Hall will be further behind in fifth place. Way out in front in Class 1, though, there are still 600 miles to go, is Jean-Pierre Mouligne, as a more relaxed, second-

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY

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The Independent's team of football writers select their best Premiership performers

The top twenty players of 1998

<p>1 MICHAEL OWEN (Liverpool)</p>  <p>The frightening thing for opposing defenders is that 19-year-old Owen is still learning. Not since Pele burst into the consciousness 40 years ago has a teenager made such an impact on a World Cup. His goal against Argentina, like Hurst's third in 1966 and Banks' save four years later, is a landmark in English football.</p>	<p>2 EMMANUEL PETIT (Arsenal)</p>  <p>Little by name, vast by achievement. Petit must fear waking up each morning in case 1998 is just a dream. In 12 months he has won the World Cup, the championship, the FA Cup and the Charity Shield and must wonder how the League Cup somehow slipped him by. After that anything will be an anticlimax.</p>	<p>3 DION DUBLIN (Aston Villa)</p>  <p>Big and powerful, Dublin's role appeared to be that of an above-average journeyman pro until John Gregory achieved what might prove to be his master-stroke by signing him for Aston Villa. Since then he has scored more quickly than Dennis Wise has earned bookings. If he continues, a championship beckons.</p>	<p>4 SOL CAMPBELL (Tottenham Hotspur)</p>  <p>But for Campbell, George Graham would probably be attempting to resurrect Tottenham from the First Division. A rock among pebbles, he was magnificent last season and, if anything, has got better since. His performance against Argentina in the World Cup was as awesome. Now if only his "goal" had been allowed to stand...</p>	<p>5 DENNIS BERGKAMP (Arsenal)</p>  <p>At his peak he is so good you are glad Bergkamp cannot stomach flying as it is the only evidence of frailty. Smooth as a cool Guinness in a Dublin pub, he was outstanding in Arsenal's run-in last season and scored the best goal in the World Cup. Only a post-France slump has denied him No 1 spot in this top 20.</p>
<p>6 PATRICK VIEIRA (Arsenal)</p>  <p>Want to know how good Didier Deschamps is? A measure is that he can keep the Arsenal midfielder out of the French team. Strong, eager and intelligent, Vieira formed the best midfield in the Premiership with Petit last season and as the post-World Cup sloth is dusted off could do so again. Has to watch his temper.</p>	<p>7 DAVID GINOLA (Tottenham Hotspur)</p>  <p>You could have had long odds on Ginola becoming the linchpin of a Graham team, but he has allied inspiration to labour so that even Granite George has softened. Suddenly Spurs look capable of winning things again and could do so in the Worthington Cup this Spring. If they do, expect Ginola to be footballer of the year.</p>	<p>8 GARETH SOUTHGATE (Aston Villa)</p>  <p>Injury denied Southgate a proper platform at the World Cup but he has made up for it since. Ehiogu and Barry have been outstanding, but even they have been eclipsed by their captain, who has been a major reason why Aston Villa top the Premiership. Articulate and intelligent, a job in the media is his ultimate destiny.</p>	<p>9 LUCAS RADEBE (Leeds United)</p>  <p>Africa has yet to find its much anticipated first World Cup-winning nation, but it is unearthing increasing numbers of world-class players, as Radebe proves. Took a while to find his position but is now established as captain of Leeds and one of the best centre-backs in Britain. Liverpool would love to buy him.</p>	<p>10 MARC OVERMARS (Arsenal)</p>  <p>After a slow start at Arsenal he finished last season as equal to Bergkamp and Petit as a major player in the Double. A quick and direct winger, he also contributed important goals, including the winner at Old Trafford and the first in the FA Cup final. Surprisingly, he failed to make much impact in France 98.</p>
<p>11 TONY ADAMS (Arsenal)</p>  <p>If Adams had never got a medal in his life he would still have lost and won more than most in coping with alcoholism. Injury brought 1998 to a frustrating end but before that he led Arsenal to the Double and had a commanding World Cup. His goal against Everton as the title was won summed up Wenger's Gunners.</p>	<p>12 DAVID BECKHAM (Manchester United)</p>  <p>Occasionally foolish and temperamental, Beckham nevertheless is a magnificent talent, as opposition fans would realise if they stopped hurling abuse and watched him. His natural position is said to be central midfield, although he is also the best crosser in the Premiership. Will never live down that sending off.</p>	<p>13 FRANCK LEBOEUF (Chelsea)</p>  <p>The only Frenchman to think Slaven Bilic is OK, he made a late and winning appearance in the French team that won the World Cup and was hugely influential for Chelsea's lesser double last season. Does not like confronting big, bruising centre forwards but, given time, he is the best passer from defence in the country.</p>	<p>14 ANDY COLE (Manchester United)</p>  <p>Glenn Hoddle might count the goals per chances ratio, but Cole remains prolific. His Manchester United place appeared under threat when Yorke was bought but he has forged a partnership that has prospered on and off the field. Speed is his greatest asset, but his distribution and control have improved beyond recognition.</p>	<p>15 RYAN GIGGS (Manchester United)</p>  <p>The great enigma. Brilliant one moment, hate-bearingly cross the next. Giggs has reserved his best moments for the Champions' League, where his speed and ability have frightened the world's best defenders. Still prone to injury, however, and his crossing sometimes is painful to watch. We await the full flow of genius.</p>
<p>16 MATT ELLIOTT (Leicester City)</p>  <p>In an age when commanding centre-halves seem to be in danger of extinction, Elliott is the genuine article. An immense aerial presence in the Leicester defence, is his ability on the floor that surprises. He is almost as likely to score a goal as stop one. Scotland should have made more of him - and will do so in future.</p>	<p>17 NICOLAS ANELKA (Arsenal)</p>  <p>Pace is the most sublime of gifts in the modern game and he has it to spare. Gérard Houllier regards Anelka as the most naturally talented boy he has ever seen and although he can still look gauche he has an FA Cup final goal and a Double to his name. The same age as Owen, the comparison is going to be fascinating.</p>	<p>18 TORRE ANDRE FLO (Chelsea)</p>  <p>Occasionally looks as awkward as Bambi on ice, then the feet suddenly find purchase and poise and he produces something that astonishes. At 6ft 4in he is always going to be a handful in the air, but he is quicker and more skilful than his size would imply. His form will be crucial to Chelsea's title hopes.</p>	<p>19 DWIGHT YORKE (Manchester United)</p>  <p>Alex Ferguson bought Yorke because his defenders always found him a handful. To date he has delivered at the rate of two goals every three games. Some players are intimidated by Old Trafford, but he has the audacity to turn up his collar and attempt to imitate the inimitable. Europe will expose whether £12m was too much.</p>	<p>20 GIANFRANCO ZOLA (Chelsea)</p>  <p>The non-availability of Landrup and Castraghi has forced Gianluca Vialli's hand so that Zola starts nearly every match for Chelsea. Inch for inch the best player in Britain, if he can withstand the rigours of a Premiership season Chelsea will go very close. Scored an exquisite goal to win the Cup-Winners' Cup.</p>

BUBBLING UNDER

21 Rio Ferdinand (West Ham)	28 Paulo Wanchope (Derby County)	35 Nigel Winterburn (Arsenal)
22 Muzzy Izet (Leicester City)	29 Paul Scholes (Manchester Utd)	36 Neil Redfearn (Charlton)
23 Gustavo Poyet (Chelsea)	30 Lee Bowyer (Leeds United)	37 Gareth Barry (Aston Villa)
24 Lee Hendrie (Aston Villa)	31 Martin Keown (Arsenal)	38 Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (Leeds United)
25 Nigel Martyn (Leeds United)	32 Ian Wright (West Ham United)	39 Harry Kewell (Leeds United)
26 Emile Heskey (Leicester City)	33 Andy Townsend (Middlesbrough)	40 Michael Hughes (Wimbledon)
27 Roberto Di Matteo (Chelsea)	34 Steve Guppy (Leicester City)	

PLAYER PROFILES
BY
GUY HODGSON

LAST YEAR'S TOP 20

1 Dennis Bergkamp (Arsenal)	8 Roy Keane (Manchester United)	15 Nicky Butt (Manchester United)
2 Gianfranco Zola (Chelsea)	9 Patrick Vieira (Arsenal)	16 Kevin Gallacher (Blackburn Rovers)
3 Peter Schmeichel (Manchester Utd)	10 Ryan Giggs (Manchester United)	17 Chris Sutton (Blackburn Rovers)
4 Paul Scholes (Manchester United)	11 Sol Campbell (Tottenham Hotspur)	18 Ian Wright (Arsenal)
5 John Hartson (West Ham United)	12 Alan Shearer (Newcastle United)	19 Steve McManaman (Liverpool)
6 David Beckham (Manchester United)	13 Matt Elliott (Leicester City)	20 Franck Leboeuf (Chelsea)
7 Nigel Martyn (Leeds United)	14 Dennis Wise (Chelsea)	

Joyce's Tigers tale in need of revision

IT IS said that there are some people at the top of English football who would do away with the FA Cup, driven by their elitism to regard everything outside the Premiership and European Champions' League as less and less relevant.

What a sad fate that would be for the competition that is the essence of football tradition, sounding the death knell for such dwindling romance as remains in a game seduced by commercialism. There would be none of those marvellous, giant-killing dramas that bring winter Saturdays alive; ties like that for which Villa Park is preparing would simply not happen.

Tomorrow's third-round match between Aston Villa and Hull City represents the very top of the Premier League against the very bottom of the Nationwide: first against 92nd in the English pecking order. It would be difficult to come up with two other clubs whose respective circumstances are so vastly different: Villa rolling their dice among the biggest players, the Tigers merely

rolling, from one week to the next, trying to win themselves the hope of a future. Yet for 90 minutes all other distractions will be suspended as 11 men meet 11.

"For us, it is just a fantastic occasion, a day that will make us some money and a game we could even win," Warren Joyce, Hull's player-manager, said.

"It is a break, a chance to play without pressure. But it should not distract attention from the real task ahead of us, which is to get enough points to keep us in the League."

Joyce was obliged to confront reality seven weeks ago when Mark Hately, the high-profile manager brought in by the Hull's former owner, the tennis entrepreneur David Lloyd, was dismissed by the consortium that had just bought Lloyd out.

The 33-year-old former captain, who served Bolton, Preston, Plymouth and Burnley before moving to Boothferry Park in 1996, had by then effectively become Hately's assistant. Were it not for his popu-



Tomorrow's third-round tie links the two clubs at opposite ends of the League - and comes as a blessed relief for Hull. By Jon Culley

larity on the terraces - he was Hull's player of the year last season - he might not have survived the shake-up, but, after impressing the new regime in his period as caretaker, Joyce was confirmed as the new man in charge.

"It is not an easy situation," he said. "But then you have to be realistic and accept that the opportunity would not have cropped up if we had not been in a mess."

Lloyd's reign had been a traumatic one. The Great Britain Davis Cup captain, who made a fortune from a string of indoor tennis centres, pumped £4m into a dream of transforming City from footballing outpost into a major concern. But he was opposed in his plans to quit Boothferry Park and blamed by

supporters for City's decline on the field. Local distrust of the Essex boy turned close to hatred when he accused Hull people of "living in the dark ages".

Lloyd threatened to close the club but was dissuaded at the 11th hour when Tom Belton, the potato farmer who was once chairman of Scunthorpe, arrived with a 12-strong consortium to buy him out.

City are no longer on the brink but after four consecutive League defeats they enter 1999 six points adrift of next-to-bottom Scarborough, requiring dramatic improvement if they are not to start next season in the Conference.

It is a fate Joyce refuses to contemplate. "If I thought we couldn't stay in the League I'd might as well

not be here," he said. "But we have not been losing by big scores."

"Mark left me with some players with a lot of potential but there were not enough men about the place," Joyce said. "Ben Morley, who scored our first goal at Luton in the last round, is only 18 and we have half a dozen others in the squad aged 20 or less. We needed some experience."

Armed with a modest transfer pot, Joyce paid £80,000 each for defenders Jason Whittle (from Stoke) and Stephen Swales (from Reading) and a further £25,000 for the Scarborough forward Gareth Williams. And he persuaded John McGovern, the manager who launched his career at Bolton, to become his right-hand man.

Having learned to coach at Manchester United's school of excellence - he worked there while playing for Burnley - Joyce has come to the job with a clear philosophy. But given that circumstances force him to continue playing, the touchline experience of McGovern is vital.

"Combining two roles has made it harder still," he said. "Better player-managers than me find it tough to do both jobs and there are only three of us on the staff - John, myself and Rod Arnold, who looks after the youth team."

"On any given day I might be training in the morning, sitting on the phone all afternoon and watching a game at night. If I get an injury, just finding the time for treatment can be a nightmare."

He watched Villa lose at Blackburn last Saturday evening, after dashing from Hull's match at Chester in the afternoon, although having seen Villa on television so many times there was little to find out that he did not already know.

"We'll give it our best and try to win as we would any other game," he said. "But whatever the result it is a chance for the club to make some cash and for the 6,000 fans coming with us it is a day out to enjoy."

"The fans have been different class since I've been in charge. And the directors have given me a



Joyce: 'Not an easy situation'

lot of support, too. After our game at Scunthorpe, when the lads worked hard and were unlucky to be beaten, several of them came down to the dressing-room afterwards. You don't get that too often when you have lost."

"They deserve a good day, too. We're all in this fight together."

Tide of support with Africans in 2006

By Glenn Moore

AMID THE popping of champagne corks and chants of "Auld Lang Syne" last night, an important football deadline passed. The second biggest prize in world football, after winning the World Cup, is to stage the quadrennial jamboree and the application period to host the 2006 competition formally closed in Zürich last night.

The seven-nation shortlist has a distinctly African flavour, with four countries applying. They represent the length and breadth of the continent, from Morocco and Egypt in the north, to sub-tropical Ghana in the west, and South Africa in the south. Africa has never hosted the finals and Sepp Blatter, the president of football's governing body, Fifa, has already said it would be "logical" to take the 2006 finals there.

However, Blatter has stressed that all World Cup requirements must be met. That means providing modern stadia, transport and telecommunications, and safe conditions for players and spectators (not to mention sponsors). This is where England and Germany, the European candidates, will hope to capitalise.

The seventh candidate is Brazil, which is relying on the emotional pull of those famous yellow shirts and the logical attraction of a first South American finals since Argentina 78.

Fifa still insists that splitting the finals, as with South Korea and Japan in 2002, is not an option, but this is not an absolute. It was not supposed to be an option in 2002. However, negotiations for 2002 are not going well and another split finals - not only would be practical between England and Germany of the bidders - is unlikely.

Campaigning will now intensify, along with the bad-mouthing. Already England, having carefully kept quiet until now, have begun dropping mentions of South Africa's "crime" problem into their pronouncements.

And yesterday the campaign director for England's 2006 bid, Alec McGivern, spoke out in response to Franz Beckenbauer's recent claim that Brazil posed a bigger threat to Germany's bid than the English.

"There has been evidence of a lack of enthusiasm among the German community, and indeed the German government in the past," McGivern said. "I think one of the things that the Germans have openly envied has been the support we have had from our own government for the bid we are putting forward."

It is especially important that the

ENGLAND

Football pedigree: Cradle of the game. World Cup winners. Hosting history: World Cup 1966, European Championship 1966, Olympics 1908, 1948.

Positives: Historical pull, successful Euro 96, excellent stadiums and infrastructure. Government support.

Negatives: Diplomatically isolated. FA leadership crisis.

Conclusion: Contenders.

GERMANY

Football pedigree: Three times World Cup winners, three times European Championship winners. Hosting history: World Cup 1974, European Championship 1988, Olympics 1936, 1972.

Positives: Excellent infrastructure and stadia. Influential friends in UEFA and FIFA.

Negatives: Mixed popular support within Germany. Hosted as recently as 1974.

Conclusion: Contenders.

MOROCCO

Football pedigree: Four World Cup appearances. African Nations Cup winners. Hosting history: African Nations' Cup: 1988.

Positives: Building support after two previous bids. Played in last two World Cups.

Negatives: Doubts about stadia and infrastructure.

Conclusion: Outsiders.

EGYPT

Football pedigree: First African nation in FIFA (1923), twice in World Cup, three times African Nations Cup winners. Hosting history: African Nations' Cup: 1957, 1959, 1970, 1974, 1986.

Positives: Relatively wealthy, long-established football base, symbolise growing Arabic influence.

Negatives: Internal and external security concerns. Infrastructure.

Conclusion: Outsiders.

BRAZIL

Football pedigree: Unrivaled, four times World Cup winners, four times Copa America champions. Football-obsessed population. Hosting history: World Cup 1950; Copa America 1919, 1922, 1949, 1989.

Positives: Football's spiritual home, bidding to be first South American hosts for 28 years. Influence within FIFA. Pele.

Negatives: Chaotic administration, crime in major cities, condition of stadia.

Ranking: Slight contenders.

GHANA

Football pedigree: Never appeared in World Cup but four times African Nations' Cup winners and impressive in FIFA youth tournaments. Hosting history: African Nations Cup: 1963, 1978.

Positives: Only central African candidate.

Negatives: Doubts over finance and infrastructure, lack of World Cup pedigree.

Conclusion: Rank outsiders.

SOUTH AFRICA

Football pedigree: Banned from FIFA under apartheid, won African Nations in 1996 and competed in 1998 World Cup. Hosting history: African Nations: 1996.

Positives: The emotional choice after ending of apartheid. Africa's strongest contender. Also hosted 1995 rugby World Cup, 1998 athletics World Cup, and several cricket tours.

Negatives: Concerns about security, especially post-Mandela. Infrastructure still needs work.

Ranking: Favourites.

Football Association settles its internal crisis quickly. Keith Wiseman, the lame-duck chairman, faces the full council on Monday 4 January. If he is re-elected, or finds a constitutional way to hang on until the summer meeting, the consequences for England's bid could be grave.

Assuming order is restored at Lancaster Gate, England's main rivals, come the final vote in March, 2000, are likely to be Germany and

South Africa. The latter are favourites, but even coming second might be enough. Fifa will reserve the right to move the finals if South Africa destabilises politically or fails to meet infrastructure requirements. This happened to Colombia in 1986 when Mexico stepped in to the breach. Given the weight of support swinging behind South Africa, this scenario could be England's best chance.

WORLD CUP FINALS 1930-98: CROWD APPEAL									
Date	Continent	Country	Attendance (Average)	1970	Central America	Mexico	1,673,975	(52,311)	
1930	South America	Uruguay	434,500 (24,138)	1974	Europe	W Germany	1,774,022	(46,684)	
1934	Europe	Italy	395,000 (23,255)	1978	South America	Argentina	1,610,215	(42,374)	
1938	Europe	France	483,000 (26,833)	1982	Europe	Spain	2,064,364	(38,816)	
1950	South America	Brazil	1,337,000 (60,772)	1986	Central America	Mexico	2,441,731	(46,956)	
1954	Europe	Switzerland	943,000 (36,270)	1990	Europe	Italy	2,515,168	(48,368)	
1958	Europe	Sweden	868,000 (24,800)	1994	North America	USA	3,567,415	(68,604)	
1962	South America	Chile	776,000 (24,250)	1998	Europe	France	2,775,400	(43,366)	
1966	Europe	England	1,614,677 (50,458)						

Scots forecast bright future for winter halt

SCOTTISH FOOTBALL attempts to re-invent itself will take a radical step forward immediately after the Old Firm game on Sunday. The match between Rangers and Celtic at Ibrox will be the last action for three weeks as the newly-established Premier League takes a three-week winter break.

The idea is not new, of course, with most European countries operating a similar system, but it is one that has been welcomed by Scotland's top clubs and could be copied by the Premiership in England.

This year - especially when the domestic season has followed hard on the heels of the World Cup - the idea of a hiatus is one that appeals particularly to players who are beginning to suffer from the demands of year-round football. Tommy Boyd, the Celtic captain, is embracing the chance to recharge the batteries. "A lot of players are still suffering from the World Cup," he said. "Personally, I would like to see a longer break but it is certainly very welcome."

The break is just one of several innovations initiated by the Premier League with the aim of improving the Scottish game. It comes at a time when some players in the successful clubs, chiefly Rangers and Celtic,

This weekend marks a break with tradition north of the border with the introduction of a three-week hiatus. By David McKinney

have already taken part in close to 30 games and, according to Roger Mitchell, the chief executive of the Scottish Premier League, the change will be welcomed by everybody.

"It gives players, pitches and fans a break from football. After Christmas we feel the supporters are consumed out, so it's better to have a break and it also gives us two events in one championship because we'll be able to re-launch the League. One of the reasons we have had a lot of games in the first half of the season is to fit in the break."

In common with its English equivalent, the Premier League in Scotland insists on pitch protection for its members. So even if the gamble of a break in January can be hostage to the vagaries of the weather, Mitchell believes cancellations will be kept to a minimum. "The clubs all have an obligation to provide a good playing surface," he said, "so the pitches will have a chance to recover although we are aware that if we break now and have a bad February it won't look so good." The

move is being especially welcomed by those clubs who have underperformed so far, a three-week break providing an opportunity to re-assess their position and, crucially, bring back injured players.

Dundee have found themselves rooted to the foot of the table for most of the campaign and, although they are one of the few clubs who will not be travelling to the sun for a break, Dick Campbell, their assistant manager, feels the rest

could be vital to their survival prospects. "We've had a few injuries to key players," he said, "and we feel we've drawn more games than any other club because we have to change our team for every match. Like Dundee United and Aberdeen we can now look forward to January as a chance to start again."

The success of the mid-season break will be monitored closely from south of the border as the English Premiership receives increasing

calls to emulate the Scots. John Gregory, the Aston Villa manager, for one, this week suggested a similar scheme be implemented.

"I don't feel there is the need to play at Christmas now in the Premiership," Gregory said. "It is about time we got our heads together and our acts together and maybe have a shut-down for a couple of weeks, because it's a crazy period in which to be battling for points."

The possibility of England following suit is not one that concerns the Scottish Premier League's Roger Mitchell, but he does believe it would be beneficial. "If it can be fitted into the calendar I think the English would be interested, but with so many games in the calendar now, including an expanded Champions' League, they will have to decide their priority," he said.

The increase in fixtures could signal the end of the League Cup, certainly in Scotland. Mitchell added: "We have to be sensible about the number of games players involved and maybe we'll have to make sacrifices." It has not been often that the Scots have led the way in British football, but perhaps the adoption of a mid-season break will be an innovation the English will come to accept.

maroon to Scottish Cup success in 1997, insists that talk of the championship at this stage is premature. "I don't set targets," he said. "These days, two or three bad results can get a manager the sack, so looking that far forward has no merit."

Jerome Varelle's shoulder injury means Williamson must choose between the experience of Ally McCoist or the promise of Mark Roberts to partner Paul Wright in attack today.



Boyd: Buoyed by new break

HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS

Aberdeen:	staying at home
Celtic:	Spain
Dundee:	to be arranged
Dundee United:	Florida
Dunfermline:	staying at home
Heart of Midlothian:	Portugal
Kilmarnock:	Portugal
Motherwell:	Tenerife
Rangers:	Florida
St Johnstone:	Spain

away from cup competitions, Altrincham swept to the top of the Uni-Bond League Premier Division after collecting six points from their two Christmas fixtures: a 3-0 victory at Runcorn followed by a 4-1 home win over Marine. The Robins have had a remarkable resurgence this season. There was talk of a crisis at Moss Lane when the former Alliance Premier League champions picked up just four points from their first eight games, but they have now collected 38 from the last 45 on offer to race up the table. They entertain fifth-placed Guiseley tomorrow.

Another club setting a fast pace in the race for promotion to the Football Conference are Nuneaton Borough, who have built up a huge 17-point lead at the top of the Dr Martens League Premier Division. They visit Halesowen Town today and entertain troubled Merthyr Tydfil on Sunday as the Dr Martens crams in two fixture cards over the New Year holiday weekend.

Things are much tighter at the top of the Ryman League, where Aylesbury United could be deposed if they lose at Gravesend & Northfleet tomorrow. The Ducks hold a slender one-point lead over three teams level on points in the Premier Division title race: St Albans City, Purfleet and Sutton United.

Baronet to take honours for Maguire

IT HAS been a difficult week for Adrian Maguire, who resigned from his job as David Nicholson's retained jockey when it became all too obvious that many of the trainer's owners wanted Richard Johnson to ride their horses instead.

There are still some old friends he can rely on, though, and Baronet, who carried him to victory in the Scottish National back in April, is a case in point.

The extended four-mile chase at Cheltenham today was once the feature event of the afternoon, but while it has now been relegated from the televised spotlight, it provides Maguire with an excellent chance to remind everyone that he is still in business.

Baronet (1.00) has inevitably risen in the weights since his win at Ayr, but there is nothing wrong with his appetite for a struggle, unlike both Seven Towers and Him Of Praise, two of his main rivals today. It will be a slog, but between them, Baronet and Maguire should muster the will to win.

BY GREG WOOD

Colin Smith, the owner of Nicholson's yard, was one of the owners who pledged to remain loyal to Maguire, and he has proved as good as his word with the Irishman taking the ride on Saddlers' Roe in the juvenile event. Dangerous Precedent (1.35) is the more likely winner, though, while Lady Rebecca (next best 2.10) is the one to be pointed.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
Nap: Jathib
(Cheltenham 2.45)
NB: Muhassil
(Catterick 3.30)

on in the handicap hurdle half an hour later, in which Richard Johnson gets his chance to impress on a Nicholson-trained horse when he wears Lord Vestey's colours on Castle Sweep.

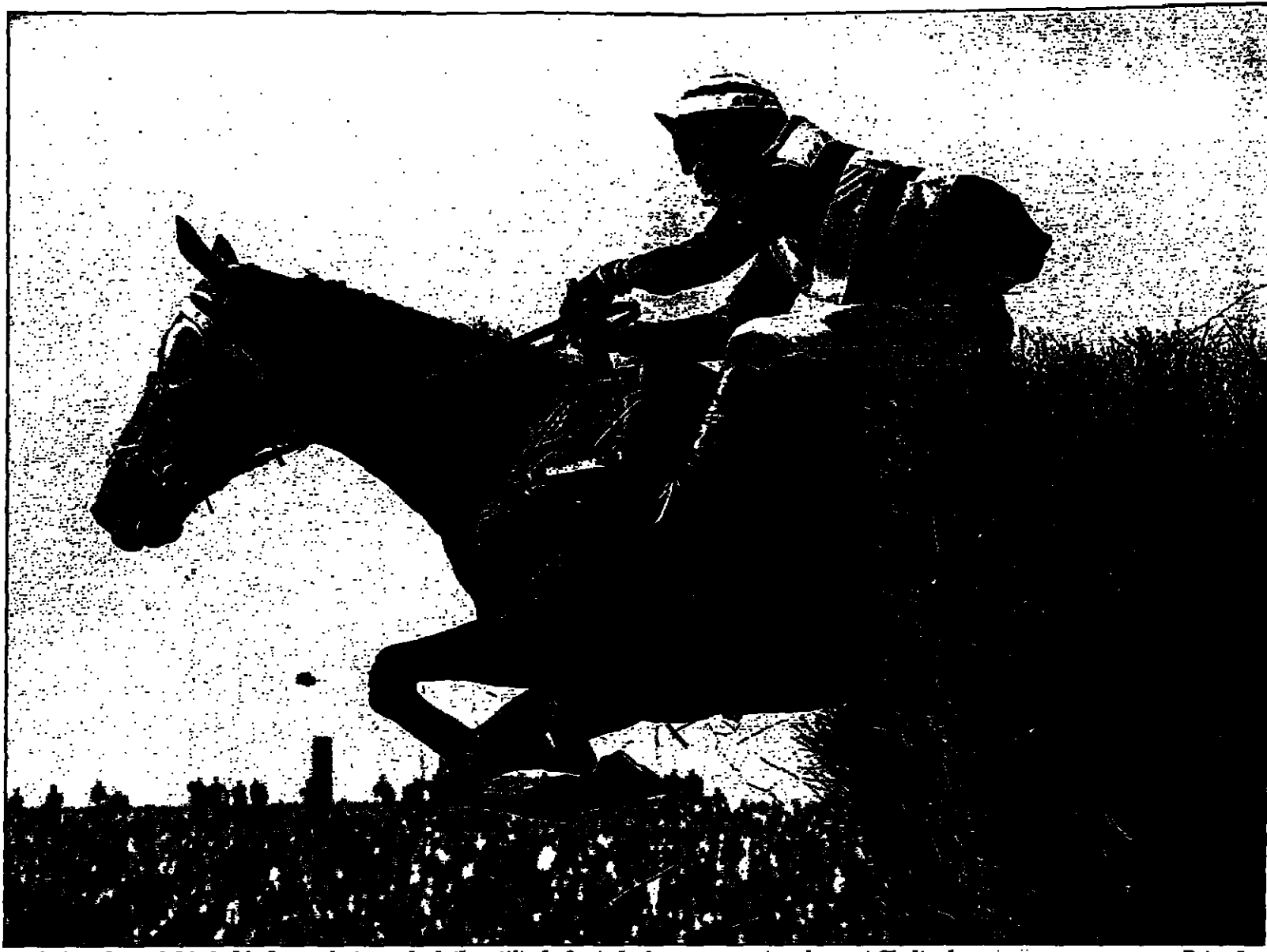
The feature race is a handicap chase with all sorts of possibilities, and includes Mahler and Fine Thyme, who both ran well for a long way when at-

tempting the impossible against Teton Mill in the Hennessy Gold Cup.

Northern Starlight, a winner at the last meeting here for Tony McCoy, is another with every chance, while Senor El Betrutti, who has never looked to lack courage, is asked to race in blinkers for the first time. "He's usually exuberant but he hasn't been attacking his fences like he did last season," his trainer, Susan Nock, said yesterday. "Things haven't gone well with him and we thought we had to try one or two things. Blinkers may help focus him." At today's weights, though, Mr Strong Gale (2.45) has every chance of reversing his Tripleprint Gold Cup form with Northern Starlight.

Only six go to post for the Sporting Index Select Chase over the cross-country course, which will be a stern test for any jockey who woke up with a delicate head this morning.

Banjo, who is ridden by Johnson for Nicholson, would give jumps of weight to the field if the race were a handicap, and clearly stands every chance. His attitude is slightly questionable, though, and previous form around this course could count for more. LINDEN'S LOTTO (nap 3.20) won the last race around it back in November, and he should be backed to make the experience count. The fact that one Adrian Maguire is the man on his back will not do him any harm either.



Banjo has the weights in his favour but may lack the attitude for today's cross-country chase at Cheltenham

Peter Jay

Edmondson nips in

RICHARD EDMONDSON increased his lead at the top of the Racing Post tipsters' table yesterday when his nap selection, Just Nip, won at odds of 3-1 following Goodtime George the previous day at 11-10. A £1 daily stake on Edmondson's naps during the National Hunt season would now yield a healthy profit of £38.98.

CHELTHENHAM

12.30 Kadou Nonantais 2.45 Capenwray (nb)
1.35 Flaked Oats 3.20 Cavalero
1.35 Wave Rock 3.55 Splendid Thyme
2.10 Lady Rebecca

GOING: Good to Soft (Good in places); Cross country course - Soft.
Left-hand, galloping course with stiff fences. Light run-in of 240yds.
Course is 1m 11 of town off A436. Bus link from Cheltenham station (served by Bristol, Birmingham and London, Paddington) 2m. ADMISSON: Club £2, Ladies £1.50 (10-15, 16-24 years, 25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 55-64 years, 65-74 years, 75-84 years, 85-94 years, 95-104 years, 105-114 years, 115-124 years, 125-134 years, 135-144 years, 145-154 years, 155-164 years, 165-174 years, 175-184 years, 185-194 years, 195-204 years, 205-214 years, 215-224 years, 225-234 years, 235-244 years, 245-254 years, 255-264 years, 265-274 years, 275-284 years, 285-294 years, 295-304 years, 305-314 years, 315-324 years, 325-334 years, 335-344 years, 345-354 years, 355-364 years, 365-374 years, 375-384 years, 385-394 years, 395-404 years, 405-414 years, 415-424 years, 425-434 years, 435-444 years, 445-454 years, 455-464 years, 465-474 years, 475-484 years, 485-494 years, 495-504 years, 505-514 years, 515-524 years, 525-534 years, 535-544 years, 545-554 years, 555-564 years, 565-574 years, 575-584 years, 585-594 years, 595-604 years, 605-614 years, 615-624 years, 625-634 years, 635-644 years, 645-654 years, 655-664 years, 665-674 years, 675-684 years, 685-694 years, 695-704 years, 705-714 years, 715-724 years, 725-734 years, 735-744 years, 745-754 years, 755-764 years, 765-774 years, 775-784 years, 785-794 years, 795-804 years, 805-814 years, 815-824 years, 825-834 years, 835-844 years, 845-854 years, 855-864 years, 865-874 years, 875-884 years, 885-894 years, 895-904 years, 905-914 years, 915-924 years, 925-934 years, 935-944 years, 945-954 years, 955-964 years, 965-974 years, 975-984 years, 985-994 years, 995-1004 years, 1005-1014 years, 1015-1024 years, 1025-1034 years, 1035-1044 years, 1045-1054 years, 1055-1064 years, 1065-1074 years, 1075-1084 years, 1085-1094 years, 1095-1104 years, 1105-1114 years, 1115-1124 years, 1125-1134 years, 1135-1144 years, 1145-1154 years, 1155-1164 years, 1165-1174 years, 1175-1184 years, 1185-1194 years, 1195-1204 years, 1205-1214 years, 1215-1224 years, 1225-1234 years, 1235-1244 years, 1245-1254 years, 1255-1264 years, 1265-1274 years, 1275-1284 years, 1285-1294 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1875-1884 years, 1885-1894 years, 1895-1904 years, 1905-1914 years, 1915-1924 years, 1925-1934 years, 1935-1944 years, 1945-1954 years, 1955-1964 years, 1965-1974 years, 1975-1984 years, 1985-1994 years, 1995-2004 years, 2005-2014 years, 2015-2024 years, 2025-2034 years, 2035-2044 years, 2045-2054 years, 2055-2064 years, 2065-2074 years, 2075-2084 years, 2085-2094 years, 2095-2104 years, 2105-2114 years, 2115-2124 years, 2125-2134 years, 2135-2144 years, 2145-2154 years, 2155-2164 years, 2165-2174 years, 2175-2184 years, 2185-2194 years, 2195-2204 years, 2205-2214 years, 2215-2224 years, 2225-2234 years, 2235-2244 years, 2245-2254 years, 2255-2264 years, 2265-2274 years, 2275-2284 years, 2285-2294 years, 2295-2304 years, 2305-2314 years, 2315-2324 years, 2325-2334 years, 2335-2344 years, 2345-2354 years, 2355-2364 years, 2365-2374 years, 2375-2384 years, 2385-2394 years, 2395-2404 years, 2405-2414 years, 2415-2424 years, 2425-2434 years, 2435-2444 years, 2445-2454 years, 2455-2464 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Racing at grass-roots level: The opening event at Fontwell yesterday, the Auld Lang Syne Novices' Hurdle, is a race that Timmy Murphy will not want to mind as he crashes to earth on the second favourite, Quetall, who was unhurt by the fall. The race went to Jamie Goldstein on Jim Jan Joey

CATTERICK

HYPERION
12.50 Meldrum Park 1.20 Helene Hill
1.55 Tom's River 2.25 Soldier Mak
2.55 Damza 3.30 Squandamania

GOING: Good (Good to Soft in places)
Left-hand course, undulating and sharp. Not suitable for the long-striding horses. Run-in 240yds.
Course is NW of town on A593. Ditch station 14m - bus service to course. ADVICE: Club 52; Tattersall 28; Course 2240 (under to horse enclosure). CAR PARK: Reserved area 22, remainder 23.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS
LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Paveley 22-22 (22.2%), M Hammond 15-12 (44.4%), M Smith 15-12 (44.4%), M Hammond 15-12 (44.4%).
LEADING JOCKEYS: P Paveley 22-22 (22.2%), M Hammond 15-12 (44.4%), M Smith 15-12 (44.4%).
FAVOURITES: 1st-340 (55.5%), 2nd-340 (55.5%), 3rd-340 (55.5%).
BLINKERS FIRST TIME: Sarncliffe (1st), 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, 108th, 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 119th, 120th, 121st, 122nd, 123rd, 124th, 125th, 126th, 127th, 128th, 129th, 130th, 131st, 132nd, 133rd, 134th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 138th, 139th, 140th, 141st, 142nd, 143rd, 144th, 145th, 146th, 147th, 148th, 149th, 150th, 151st, 152nd, 153rd, 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SPORT

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE FOR HULL P17 • NEW YEAR RACECARDS P18-19



Four Hills good for Germany's high-flying young ace of 'sexy' ski jumping



Martin Schmitt, the wunderkind of German ski jumping, takes to the air at Garmisch-Partenkirchen as he prepares for today's Four Hills event. The 20-year-old won the opening event in the tournament at Oberstdorf this week and is favourite to add to his five victories this season. 'This is a dream - a really sexy feeling,' Schmitt said after thrilling 40,000 fans with his triumph AP

Wenger insists Vieira is victim

FOOTBALL

BY MARK BRADLEY

ARSENE WENGER has called the Charlton midfielder Neil Redfearn a "cheat" in the wake of the sending off of Patrick Vieira on Monday. The Arsenal manager believes Redfearn should be the first victim of a proposed crackdown by the Football Association.

Vieira was dismissed at The Valley when Redfearn went down clutching his face after the Arsenal midfielder apparently raised an elbow. Wenger is convinced after viewing video evidence that Vieira only struck his opponent in the chest and that Redfearn should be the punished for play-acting.

"My thought is that Patrick didn't deserve to be sent off and that Neil Redfearn cheated the referee," Wenger said. "Usually I think Redfearn is an honest type but on that occasion maybe Charlton wanted so much to win the game that he was ready for everything to get [Vieira] sent off. I don't think his behaviour was fair."

However, Redfearn insisted his conscience was clear last night. "The first time he [Vieira] swung he caught me on the cheek... it was quite painful," he said.

The FA spokesman, Steve Double, said Arsenal had yet to appeal against the decision.

Nicola Bertoli has left Tottenham to join the Spanish First Division club Alaves, while the 37-year-old former England international Peter Beardsley has moved to Hartlepool until the end of the season. Leeds are trying to sign the Benfica striker Nuno Gomes in a £3.2m deal.

Enter Giles in Test of spin

IF AUSTRALIA took something of a gamble by selecting Shane Warne to play in the fifth Test starting here tomorrow, England backed a rank outsider yesterday when they named their 12 for the match. The England line-up includes a player not even in their squad for the Test series, the Warwickshire left-arm spin bowler Ashley Giles.

Giles, who has not played since September, arrived in Australia only last week with the limited-overs team but has been rushed into the squad for the fifth Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground, where England are bidding to square the series.

England's captain, Alec Stewart, said the starting team for the Test would not be de-

CRICKET

BY DEREK PRINGLE
in Sydney

cided until match day but hinted Giles was likely to play because of the SCG's reputation as a spinners' wicket.

The pitch, allegedly spinning even more than usual this season, will decide everything. It may even force Stewart back into keeping wicket, though to do that it will have to promise to spin extravagantly on the second day, in which case Giles would replace Warren Hegg and join Peter Such as the second spinner. At a pinch, and should the "good of the team" demand it, Stewart could open and keep.

"If he [Giles] does play, it will be asking a lot, but we feel this fellow is up to it," Stewart said. "He has played big games for Warwickshire, he's already played one Test match and we feel, if he is asked, there won't be a problem."

The SCG has obviously got a history of turning and we just felt with him in the country it gives us another option."

Giles played his one and only Test against South Africa this year, moving ahead of Phil Tufnell in the England pecking order, and finished with match figures of 1 for 106.

Although his only action so far has been in the one-day match against Queensland Country earlier this week, he is confident

of performing well. "Everyone will be nervous, it's a big test for England," Giles said.

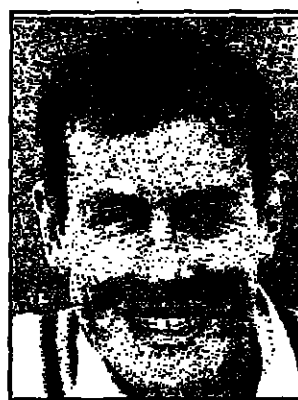
Sadly, unless the pitch is green and hard, or Stewart plays five bowlers, there will be no place for Alex Tudor. Sport is ruthless in punishing those who miss their opportunities and Tudor's withdrawal from the fourth Test with a sore hip meant that others took the wickets on a pitch where he might otherwise have made his name.

If there is anyone besides Giles and Warne for whom the Sydney Test will be an examination of character, it is Michael Atherton. The former England captain has played 88 Tests for England but could scarcely have contributed less towards England's victory in Melbourne, where he registered his first pair in Test cricket.

Unlike Warne, who has largely had a low-key build-up to this moment, Atherton's tour has been discussed and dissected, his poor form blamed on anything from technical problems and bachelordom to a bad back.

In three days of cricket at the MCG, he only touched the ball twice, once to smother a catch to Ian Healy (though judging by his reaction he obviously felt he did not hit it) and once with the inside edge, a nick that prevented a very plumb looking lbw from being given out.

He missed the next ball but then so might have one or two,



Giles: Sudden summons

his off-stump flattened by a corker from Damien Fleming. When fielding he fared little better, and placed mainly at first slip he looked on as Graeme Hick pounced the flying edges.

Failure at the highest level is never tolerated for long before more pressing questions are asked, so Atherton needs a score. Mind you, talk that Sydney could be his last Test is piffle. It was only four months ago that the whole of Britain was lauding him for his undefeated match-clinching 98 against South Africa at Trent Bridge.

Mind you, there is no doubt that he is more than a little preoccupied by the slump and, quite simply, if England are to improve their chances of leaving Australia all-square, they need him in the runs.

In some ways, Melbourne

was fairly typical of England's victories, in that the match situation left them few alternatives. In other words there was a single route on which to focus their efforts. Winning at Sydney, on what will probably be a bumsen burner (a big turning wicket) will require them to shape the game, and that means big runs from both openers. If the ball is turning, scoring runs down the order could be a tricky business.

If England were gamblers, which they tend not to be, John Crawley would probably be a better bet than Mark Butcher. Australia, in a move almost unprecedented in modern Test cricket, are set to play three spinners. Both Crawley and Atherton play spin well, while Butcher is only adequate against it. Of course, to get to the spinners, both Lancastrians have to get past Glenn McGrath first, something they have failed to do all four.

There is no doubt that Australia will come to Sydney more than a little startled by the intensity of England's cricket in the last Test. The juggernaut that threatened to overwhelm England has suddenly blown a tyre, its momentum slowed to something more manageable, more beatable even.

That is why Warne has been brought in, possibly before he is quite ready. The mind game is big in Australia and spinners will be the biggest exponents of

that, especially now that McGrath has been gagged.

In four Shield games Warne has taken eight wickets and largely looked ineffectual. With wrist-spinners, what you see is not always what you get, and England's batsmen will still have "that ball" he bowled at Manchester five years ago etched into their minds. As Ian Botham constantly discovered, reputation is power.

Four years ago, England went to the last Test in Perth needing to win to square the series and were blown away. Sydney, however, is a slower beast than the WACA speedway and should better suit them, particularly if Warne does not hit his straps from the off and MacGill is not further inspired by the close competition.

More than likely, it will be a important toss to win and Stewart, having lost four on the bounce, is owed one. The fireworks in Sydney harbour on New Year's Eve are legendary. The ones two days later at the SCG, with Warne back in situ, could be even better.

ENGLAND (from 11 to 15): Atherton (Lancashire), A. J. Stewart (Sussex, capt), M. A. Butcher (Sussex), M. H. Marshall (Gloucestershire), G. A. Hick (Warwickshire), P. C. Topley (Lancashire), M. Hegg (Lancashire, wkt), A. D. Bell (Gloucestershire), A. F. Giles (Warwickshire), D. M. Headley (York), D. Gough (Yorkshire), A. D. Mather (Leicestershire), P. M. Such (Essex). AUSTRALIA (from 11 to 15): M. A. Taylor (capt), M. J. Slater, J. L. Langer, M. E. Waugh, S. F. Waugh, D. S. Lehmann, I. A. Healy (wkt), S. K. Warne, S. C. G. MacGill, D. M. Fleming, C. H. Miller, G. D. McGrath, D. B. H. Hay (wkt) and R. S. Durne (NZ). Race row mars Test, page 15

Danson dropped for tie

BY GUY HODGSON

PAUL DANSON, the referee who was relegated from the Premiership list at the end of the 1996-97 season, has been taken off tomorrow's FA Cup third-round tie between Lincoln City and Sunderland at Sincil Bank after requests from both clubs.

The decision, almost unprecedented, was taken by the Football Association after an initial approach from Sunderland, whose last match under the Leicester-based referee resulted in two players being sent off in the first 20 minutes against Arsenal at Highbury in September 1996.

Lincoln, whose chairman and manager, John Reames, is a former chairman of the FA's Referees Committee, also wished to have Danson removed, after a controversial match at Northampton Town earlier this season where a mass fracas broke out.

No replacement official has been announced, but the FA has decided to act to prevent any possibility of public order being affected by Danson's involvement. David Davies, the FA's acting chief executive, said: "The views of both clubs were taken into account before that decision was made."

Sunderland's view was clouded by Danson's performance at Highbury two years ago, when Martin Scott and Paul Stewart were dismissed during a 2-0 defeat. Danson was removed from the Premiership list at the end of that season after a sequence of low marks from the referees' assessor, and has since been restricted to officiating games in the Nationwide League and below.

PREMIERSHIP PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

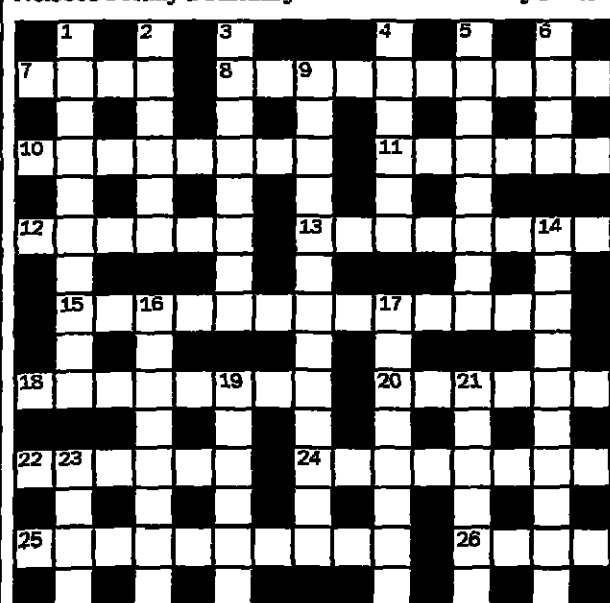
Due to production problems yesterday, we were unable to publish our "Premiership Footballers of the Year" feature, which was advertised on the front page of some early editions. It appears today on page 16.

THE FRIDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3808 Friday 1 January

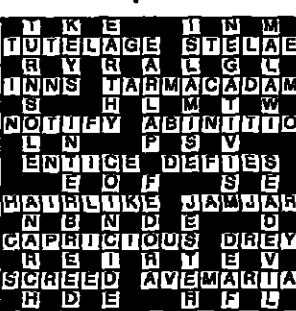
by Mass

Thursday's solution



- ACROSS**
- Provide transport for Army team (4)
 - Nothing in flowing lute music's finicky in performance (10)
 - Upset open vessel (8)
 - Pen promissory note (6)
 - Actually North's forced into one contract (6)
 - Like addicts' ultimate habits (8)
 - In an uncalled-for manner? (13)
 - Helps one loading fourth of leavings into skips (8)
 - Motor about in benign environment (6)
 - Emblem (Royal beast) (6)
 - Essential in time to have big return (8)
 - Metal dealer's elaborat-

- ing more on ring (10)
- Final explosion annihilating bomber (4)
- DOWN**
- Cover up vehicle: flaking side must be protected against rust (10)
 - Force a way through, taking Queen with Rook, e.g.? (6)
 - Burn Sunday crumble (8)
 - Fish with party in Southern Italy (6)
 - Latin air extemporised in studies for trumpets (8)
 - Right crushing front of pug's mug (4)
 - This could be slating enough! (6-7)
 - Characteristic of one's



- salad days, perhaps (10)
- Loud programme? Man's following... (8)
 - tender piece of music (8)
 - Drag, on the box (8)
 - Joke: after performance, break leg (6)
 - A sign of boiling river in the Dales (4)

Dog's life for chocolate 'cheats'

BY GREG WOOD

FIRST IT was Ben Johnson, then the Tour de France, and now even the remote sporting outpost that is whippet racing finds itself in the grip of a doping scandal.

Throughout the north of England, dogs are being stripped of championships and owners expelled from the sport, while bitter controversy rages in the pages of Whippet magazine. The agent in question, though, is not testosterone or even EPO, but something more in tune with whippet racing's modest means - the humble chocolate drop.

For years, a chocolate button or two was a familiar treat in the diet of a racing dog,

which spends 99 per cent of its life doing nothing more competitive than playing the family pet. Whippet racing has always been a hobby, carried on quietly and almost unnoticed since the distant days when beer was tuppence a pint and City were the best side in Manchester.

But that was before the National Whippet Racing Association, the sport's governing body, decided to introduce drug-testing to its competitions, and quickly uncovered a series of positive results for theobromine and, in minute quantities, caffeine.

Since both substances are metabolites of the cocoa bean, the evidence pointed to nothing more sinister than some mild cases of canine chocolate. Not, however, in the eyes of the NWRA, which soon set about disqualifying dogs and banning their owners. Their protests that doping whippets would be pointless, since there is no betting or prize-money involved were ignored, while angry articles in Whippet accused the owners of cheating.

But now the whippets and their owners are fighting back. They are led by Mark Pettitt, from Ilkerton, whose dog Xpelli was one of the best racers the

sport has seen and among those to return positive tests. "They just will not listen to reason," he says. "Innocent people with pets who are just in this for fun are being branded drug cheats, and I will not stand by and see people bullied. I will see justice done, one way or another. People's lives are being ruined by this."

There is talk of a court case, perhaps even a libel action if the allegations are not retracted and the dogs and owners reinstated. The NWRA, though, shows no signs of giving way. In order to win justice, Pettitt may indeed be forced to cry havoc, and let slip the whippets of war.

FRIDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

So much of our Irish past is snagged with myth and suppressed memory, it is as if the blood and the bitterness made truth too painful to bear

by Fergal Keane, in search of the real history of his family and his country



It was an election campaign which promised to be as bitter as any ever fought in Listowel. On one side Fianna Fail, the party of De Valera and militant Irish nationalism; on the other was Fine Gael, the party which descended from Michael Collins and those who had voted for the partition of Ireland in 1922. Looming over both was the shadow of the Catholic church, an institution of unrivalled power in Listowel, as in most other southern towns. Both parties paid obeisance to the church. Both doffed their caps to the priests. But if moral issues (in Ireland that usually meant anything to do with sex) were not involved, the priests tended to stay in the background during elections.

And like every campaign since partition, the election campaign of 1951 was dominated by the politics of the civil war. The stuff which was kept under wraps most of the time came flooding out in elections: who had fought on what side, who had killed who, who had really represented the will of the Irish people.

Both sides were timbering up for an orgy of bile and insults. Enter my uncle, John B. Keane, and a group of subversive associates. Sick to death of the old bitterness, they decided to take matters into their own hands and put up a non-party candidate. He was the inestimable and unimpeachable Thomas Doodle Esq. Needless to say, Tom Doodle did not exist. In reality he was a friend of my uncle's who was persuaded to disguise himself and play the part for the duration of the campaign.

At first the main parties were inclined to ignore the Doodle campaign. The work of young lads with nothing better to do. And then came the Doodle monster meeting. Those who were present remember it as the biggest meeting in the town since Parnell came in the last century. Crowds pressed around the railway station where my uncle and his friends were waiting with a horse-drawn carriage to meet the candidate. As he emerged, a brass band began to play and somebody in the crowd fired several celebratory shots into the air.

Followed by several hundred people, Doodle and his spin-doctors proceeded to the market square, where he unveiled his daring manifesto to rescue Ireland from civil war politics. The promises were intentionally ludicrous. The crowd knew this and cheered him on wildly. On jobs, he pledged to open a factory for shaving the hair off gooseberries; there was also a hint of universal free drink. Crucially, he promised "that every man would have more than the next". In the atmosphere of political chicanery and unrealistic promises which prevailed at the time, the crowd delighted in the biting satire.

The meeting finished with the ringing campaign slogan: "Vote the Doodle and give the whole Kaboodle to Doodle". To organic cheering, Doodle vanished into the night. In the event, Doodle did not stand in the election. His candidacy was a joke, but a very pointed one. Spare us your old hatreds, the young were saying, we want a different Ireland.

My uncle would later carry on the battle as one of Ireland's best-loved writers, satirising the crony politics of the day and portraying in his plays a country struggling for social and political change. In the Sixties, he was one of the leaders of a movement which would argue against the compulsory teaching of Irish in schools. Although a fluent speaker and lover of Irish, John B felt the young were being turned against the language. He had little time for the narrow nationalist elite who used the language as a political weapon. It was a stand which would earn him verbal and physical abuse, culminating in a savage attack at a meeting in Dublin, from which he was lucky to escape without serious injury.

I only heard the story of Tom Doodle in its full glory last summer, in the course of a long journey back through the political landscape

of my childhood and family. I knew that various members of my father's family had been involved in the IRA, among them my grandmother, Hanorah Purtil. Once while staying with her in Kerry during the holidays, I remember a war pension arriving at her house on Church Street. And when I asked her about it she admitted she'd once been an IRA volunteer.

But like so many who had taken part in the bitter struggles of 1919-22, Hattie Keane was slow to talk about what had happened, what she had seen and done. I knew only that she was a devout follower of Michael Collins and that after the Treaty she had abandoned the gun in favour of politics. Throughout my life I had known her as a gentle granny, a woman who passionately



Fergal Keane's uncle, the playwright John B. Keane (top), and his grandmother, Hanorah Purtil (above), an IRA volunteer during the War of Independence

supported constitutional politics and never neglected to cast her vote. And so when my uncle told me about her revolutionary life one morning last summer, I knew I was discovering an altogether more complex woman.

At the age of 17, Hattie Keane had become a member of Cumann Na Mban, the female wing of the IRA. The women provided intelligence, logistical and moral support to the gunmen who were attacking British forces and the Royal Irish Constabulary. My grand-uncle, Mick Purtil (Hattie's brother), was one of the main IRA leaders in the area.

One of Hattie's jobs was to smuggle guns around the neighbourhood. According to my uncle, she did this by concealing them in her underwear; a place not even the notorious Black and Tans (British Irregulars) would think of searching. But they did suspect

her enough to issue a death threat. One evening while she was walking home, a Black and Tan by the name of Darcy stopped Hattie and put a gun to her head. She was given 24 hours to get out of town, a warning she chose to ignore.

Hattie survived, but many of her comrades-in-arms did not. Hattie Keane was no different from thousands of young men and women who had flocked to the republican movement after the British had executed the leaders of the Easter 1916 rebellion. In a matter of weeks, British stupidity had inflamed public opinion. The radicalisation of public opinion which the rebels had sought was achieved by British firing squads. As my uncle put it to me: "If you have never had to aspire for freedom, if you have always had it, then it's impossible to understand what it means to live without it".

The War of Independence in North Kerry was a savage affair. The nearby town of Ballylongford was attacked and burned by the Black and Tans; in the valley of Knockanure, the Tans shot dead three men after ordering them to run across an open field. My grand-uncle helped the only survivor of that attack to escape and bring the story to national attention.

For its part, the IRA conducted a ruthless campaign, killing Black and Tans and also fellow Irishmen who wore the uniform of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Houses belonging to unpopular Protestant landlords were burned, those suspected of pro-British sympathies were killed or driven out, informers were executed without mercy.

In one case an RIC district inspector was walking up Church Street in Listowel after attending mass when he was surprised by the IRA and murdered. I don't know how much of the local campaign my grandmother participated in, or how much she knew about the planning of such attacks. I do remember my father telling me a story about a murdered British officer haunting the house on Church Street, a green shadow who flickered across the walls at night.

Was this the fruit of fantasy or did it hint at some dark story untold? My grandmother died before I was interested enough to ask her about the truth of those days. I will never know. So much of our Irish past is snagged with myth and suppressed memory, it is as if the blood and the bitterness made truth too painful to bear. When the British departed in 1922 the IRA split. My grandmother took the side of the pro-Treaty forces.

The issue then, as now, was the partition of the country. Where you stood on partition, whether you would kill and die over it, became the trenchline that defined our national politics for generations. In North Kerry the Civil War was, in the words of Professor Brendan Kennelly, a family friend and a leading Irish poet: "The dirtiest fight of all time, families split by it, football teams split by it. A bitter, bitter time".

Two stories he remembers from that time: at Ballyseedy outside the town of Tralee, soldiers of the Free State Army tied nine IRA prisoners to a landmine and then stood back and detonated the device. Eight of the men were blown to pieces. One miraculously survived to tell the story. At Clashmelcon, near Listowel, a group of IRA men hiding in caves overlooking the sea were urged to surrender and climb up some ropes which had been lowered by the Army. As they came to the top, the soldiers cut the ropes and sent the men falling to their deaths on the rocks below.

That was Irishmen killing Irishmen. Irish Catholics killing Irish Catholics. I did not hear those stories growing up. The history I learned in school was safe history: Irish heroes and English villains. And there was no shortage of English villainy to contemplate. The curse of Cromwell, the rebellion of 1798, the Famine, the Easter Rising, the Black and Tans. But the blood and guts of what we did to each other was skipped over. The Civil War and the bloody reality of what the IRA did in

prosecuting its war against the British was glossed over.

I went to school in 1966, the year Ireland celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising. They were stirring times. I remember the radio relentlessly playing ballads and martial music. As the voice of one announcer droned repeatedly: "If you must sing a song, sing an Irish song".

I dreamed of dying for Ireland. Our schoolyard battles were always the same: the Irish versus the Brits. My hero was Patrick Pearse. Noble and handsome. I longed to emulate him, to perish in glorious battle. And I understood, too, that to be Irish was to be Catholic. I may have loathed the boredom of Sunday masses

Continued on page 2

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INSIDE

Letters 2
Leaders and comment 3-4
Obituaries 5

Features 6
Arts 7
Music 8-9

Listings 10
Radio 11
TV 12

MUSIC

Turn of the year

Sir: Is it not time the authorities in London looked into an organised event for New Year's Eve? Year after year we have the police asking for people not to attend the annual gathering at Trafalgar Square, and this is ignored by thousands. It is time for our great capital city to follow the lead of Edinburgh and organise an event, perhaps in Hyde Park, with screens showing Big Ben, live music and maybe even the London Mayor.

ANDREW REEVES
Dartford, Kent

Sir: Ian Campbell comments that "over the Christmas period travel by rail has been impossible" (letter, 30 December). One reason has been the lack of any Christmas timetable available to the public.

In previous years free timetables have been available. The notice at my local station indicates that a modified service is running over Christmas and the New Year, but gives no clue as to what these modifications may be. Ring the national rail inquiry number and you are greeted with a recorded message to the effect that because of adverse weather conditions in Scotland and the North of England, all lines are busy.

Am I being over-cynical in thinking that train operators are looking for an excuse (few passengers) to cut down even further the services over Christmas and New Year? And if train times are not published, how can you complain about cancellations and delays?

SUSAN WATKIN
Lincoln

Sir: Ted Hughes said: "Before us stands yesterday." So it does, but what if we choose to ignore it?

Throughout 1998 we have seen fit to dismiss the 350th anniversary of 1648, the climactic year of the English Revolution: the Second Civil War, the defeat of Stuart absolutism, Pride's Purge and the creation of cabinet government in the Council of State. It was the year that set the pattern for the American and French revolutions. Bunyan said of this message: "Until you know this you are to yourselves unknown."

There may be some remedy at hand. The new year is the 400th anniversary of Cromwell's birth and the 350th of the end of Charles I, to be marked by an exhibition at the Museum of London. Into both we can read the deeper constitutional significance of 1648.

PETER CADOGAN
London NW6

Dollar vs euro

Sir: Lord Howe's myopic article "Declare for the euro now, Mr Blair" (31 December) is typical of those that ignore the ever-spreading use of the US dollar for commercial purposes everywhere else in the world. Given our common roots, language, legal system, defence synergies and currency stability with the USA, it is criminal that there is no debate over which currency block we should be joining.

RON WEST
Croydon, Surrey

Sir: The launch of the euro requires a sustained and serious discussion on its inevitable effects for Britain. Its very existence affects the UK. It is imperative that Britain makes a positive decision.

Over the past few years Britain has adopted a wait-and-see policy. Politicians have run scared of the tabloid press. But now, the actual existence of the euro forces us to decide how to act to prevent the UK being pushed to the periphery of Europe, and the loss of political

influence that implies. We call on the Government to set a date for British entry into the euro. Young people's jobs depend upon it.

ROBERT COPPINGER
President
Young European Movement
London SW1

Millennium man

Sir: Humans are the only creatures on this planet who can ask how we came to be here. Only the scientific method offers a way to answer such questions. Of those who have had the greatest impact on the progress of science my own choice for person of the millennium is Charles Darwin. The understanding of evolution is the single most important event so far in our path to understanding of life. In the next millennium the scientific method should yield a full biological understanding of life starting with the description of the sequence of the human genome.

ALAN R WILLAMSON
Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire

Term-time holidays

Sir: Modern education has been described as "the mouse race that trains our children for the rat race". Heaven forbid that those young, inquiring minds should ever be allowed to focus on anything but the grim tasks of "curriculum tests". Unthinkable that these lively little folk should be let loose, during term-time to do such useless things as visiting cathedrals, exploring rock pools, listening to other languages and music, walking on nature trails, seeing how children in other

countries live, climbing mountains, learning to swim or snorkel, calculating in foreign currencies or experiencing at first hand those other cultures from which their parents may have sprung ("Heads seek term-time holiday ban", 30 December). Perhaps the National Association of Head Teachers would prefer children to be manacled to their desks so that parents would be unable to spirit them away during term-time for these dreadful, unscheduled holidays.

I shall always remember a conversation I had with one of my daughters, a few days after we returned from a three-month tour of Europe (in term time). "The kids in my class have just finished a project on ancient Greece," said this little girl who, a few weeks earlier, had been staring awestruck at the Parthenon and running

aces with her sister among the ruins of Olympia. "And can you believe, they thought it was boring. I felt so sorry for them."

Teachers had been supportive, asking only that the girls keep a diary of their journey and bring it back to share with the class. But that was 1977. I guess the mouse race has become grimmer since then. Poor little mice.

MARIAN MCCAIN
Ivybridge, Devon

Hit and miss

Sir: It is worrying to hear that senior police officers like Roy Penrose cite films as an explanation for the rise of the "hit-men" in Britain (report, 28 December). We might expect this simplistic explanation from people ignorant of the pattern of hit-man killings, or prepared to forget hit-

man films going back to Jimmy Cagney. Old Mafia movies and the Krays show us that explanation is not found in Hollywood, but in the socio-economic conditions of Britain.

We have moved closer to the US in many other respects. The hit-man, like the age-structured gang and the drug territory battles, is but one facet of social exclusion and the cheapening of human life.

Perhaps the director-general of our National Crime Squad was fired up by Christmas repeats, but our interests would be better served if he addressed the real issues. I assume that he does not blame killer-cop movies for the rise in police resort to firearms?

ANDY WILSON
Mannheim Centre for
Criminology
London School of Economics
London SE10

Wowser country

Sir: I am surprised by Christopher Hawtree's claim (Words, 23 December) that the word "wowser", meaning killjoy, "was in recent use in both England and America before becoming Australian," with evidence offered that *The Economist* used it here in 1963 followed by *The Times* in 1977. I heard it commonly in Australia for years before I left there in 1954.

And only in Australia: over a period of two years during the war here I found no English person who understood the word and for more than 30 years past here, I have consistently had to explain to English people what it means and even how to spell it.

My 1951 edition of the Concise Oxford Dictionary includes it - correctly - as "puritanical fanatic" with its source as Australia. I have never known an American who knew the word or its meaning, including my American relatives.

I cannot say that it has never been used elsewhere, but it surely is as Australian as "bunyip" (a mythical animal) or "furphy" (rumour).

LEN CLARKE
Uzbridge, Middlesex

Pigeon post?

Sir: Appropriate to get an explanation of "round robin" sent to Canary Wharf from Leighton Buzzard (letter, 28 December). My own round robin is outside the kitchen window; to my fat cat's disgust, he was the recipient of the remains of the Christmas turkey.

MICHAEL J J DAY
Giggleswick, North Yorkshire

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Panto Season No 5: At the Nordcott Theatre in Exeter, members of the chorus for 'Dick Whittington' wait in the wings

John Voss

Fergal Keane's Ireland

Continued from page 1

but my Catholic identity was not up for debate. It had come down to me from my devout grandmother, who had in turn been given it by her grandparents.

But looking back now I sense that 1966 was the high watermark of the old nationalism. The Irish identity which had been defined in terms of its Catholic faith and its antagonism to the British was evolving into something altogether more exciting.

We might have played war games in the day but at night we had television to look at, with its imported programmes and ideas. We were heading into Europe, taking part in UN peacekeeping operations, we were embarking on economic policies that reversed the isolationism of the past. My uncle John E and many other writers were challenging the accepted orthodoxies of church and state. The women's movement was agitating on issues such as contraception and equal rights in the workplace.

All around me Ireland was changing, but I was too young to see it. I do have one memory which underlines both the nature of the state and the challenge it was facing. Every few weeks my mother would hand me a brown envelope and send me to Mrs Gleeson's chemist around the corner from our Dublin home. Once inside, I would hand the envelope to the chemist on duty. She would disappear into a back room and return with the envelope, filled now with small tablets. "What's that, man?" I asked one morning. "That's just the Pill, love. Just the Pill."

I hadn't a clue what "the Pill" was but I knew it was something secret. And there it was, a small act of subversion, but one being repeated by women across the country. It was a new revolution, altogether different from the battles of the past.

And then, in 1969, the long, festering wound of partition burst in our faces. The politics of blood returned to Ireland and filled our television screens every night. As the Troubles ground on we were alternately horrified, outraged, sickened, mystified, saddened, apathetic. The struggle which my grandmother and her comrades had abandoned in 1922 in favour of constitutional politics had come back to haunt us.

At first we felt sympathy for the Northerners, our nationalist impulses twitched reflexively. But the war up North was brutal and unmerciful. Disembodied bodies. Widows and orphans. We didn't live through it, but its poison infected the whole island. And with every brutal image, it became harder to cling to the simplistic, nationalist pieties. To paraphrase Yeats: Romantic Ireland was dead and gone.

It took 30 years of murder and violent sectarianism to bring the people of Ireland, north and south, to the point of agreement. Now we have reached that point, there is a feeling akin to a collective intake of breath. We hover before this peace, uncertain and nervous. Will it last? Where will it take us? What kind of country have we become on the journey to peace? I don't know what my grandmother would think of this new Ireland. I suspect the conservative, Catholic part of her nature would find some of the changes difficult to accept. But I hope the revolutionary in her, the rebel heart, would celebrate the freedom we are finding.

Fergal Keane's three-part series 'Irish Journeys' begins on Saturday at 7.25pm on BBC 2

THIS WEEK IN
THE INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY

Anita Brookner on a new exhibition of Ingres' paintings

What happens when you snort heroin? Aerobics teacher Emily Jenkins describes her experience

An exclusive Independent readers' offer:
New Year's resolutions even you can keep

WHEN DID you last make a New Year's resolution and keep it? Not for a long time. If ever. And I'll tell you why. It's because we all make resolutions to cure the worst part of our behaviour. In other words, we make the resolutions that are least likely to be kept, because they are the hardest.

An untidy person resolves to be tidy and an overweight person to eat less. Fat chance. Ten days later the mess is as bad as ever and the diet forgotten.

So here's what you must do. You must make a resolution which you will find easy to keep. And the best way to do that is choose a resolution at random. How do you make a resolution at random? Easy. You pick one from the following list of resolutions, randomly provided by our tireless Independent computer.

Just stick a pin in the piece and make a solemn oath to keep whatever oath fate lands you with. Here we go, then. Say after me: I resolve...

If overweight, to be tidier.

If untidy, to eat less.

To buy no more books until I have read all the books I already possess.

To throw out all the dried spices on my kitchen shelf which are more than 10 years old or which I cannot identify with a blindfold sniff.

To buy my produce at Little High Street shops until Safeways has gone bankrupt, or at least until I am forced to go back to Safeways because there were no bloody aubergines in the bloody High Street.

To give up reading any articles which are headed: "New Labour, new rift" or "Cancer cure breakthrough" or "African fossil find leads to rethink on human origins".

To boldly split infinitives without a qualm.

Not to use such pointless time-wasting expressions as "as it were", "as it might be", "as such" or "if you like".

To buy no more books until I have read all the books I already possess.



MILES KINGSTON
To visit a total stranger in hospital and keep telling her you hardly recognise her

Never again to sing "My Way", or any part of it.

To smile at drivers who cut in front of me and discover that road rage is even more effective (ie annoying) than road rage.

To get rid of all Ordnance Survey maps more than 10 years old, unless

they are more than 50 years old and therefore getting valuable again.

To practise my signature until it begins to look something like the scrawls on my credit cards again.

To give up reading all articles headed "BBC reshuffle spells new threat to radio", "Sports supreme promises massive shake-up" or "TV documentary was fixed".

To go carol singing next year, but singing only carols in French.

When asked what I want to drink in a pub, to say "The unusual, please" and then to try something new for a change.

To ruthlessly reduce the number of keys on my key-ring by half.

Never to vote in any personality of the year contest, or anything which in-

volves ringing one number for Yes and another for No.

To phone up a prostitute's telephone number and try to sell her double glazing.

To avoid all articles headed: "New ways with noodles" or "Open up that attic" or "Ten uses for a converted church".

To think up 10 more valid uses to which cotton buds can be put.

To visit a total stranger in hospital and keep telling her you hardly recognise her.

To ask people if they have noticed that nobody seems to be discussing Peter Mandelson's sexuality any more.

Never to call anything "the new rock'n'roll".

THE INDEPENDENT

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Midnight! A happy, bouncing euro is born as 1999 rings in

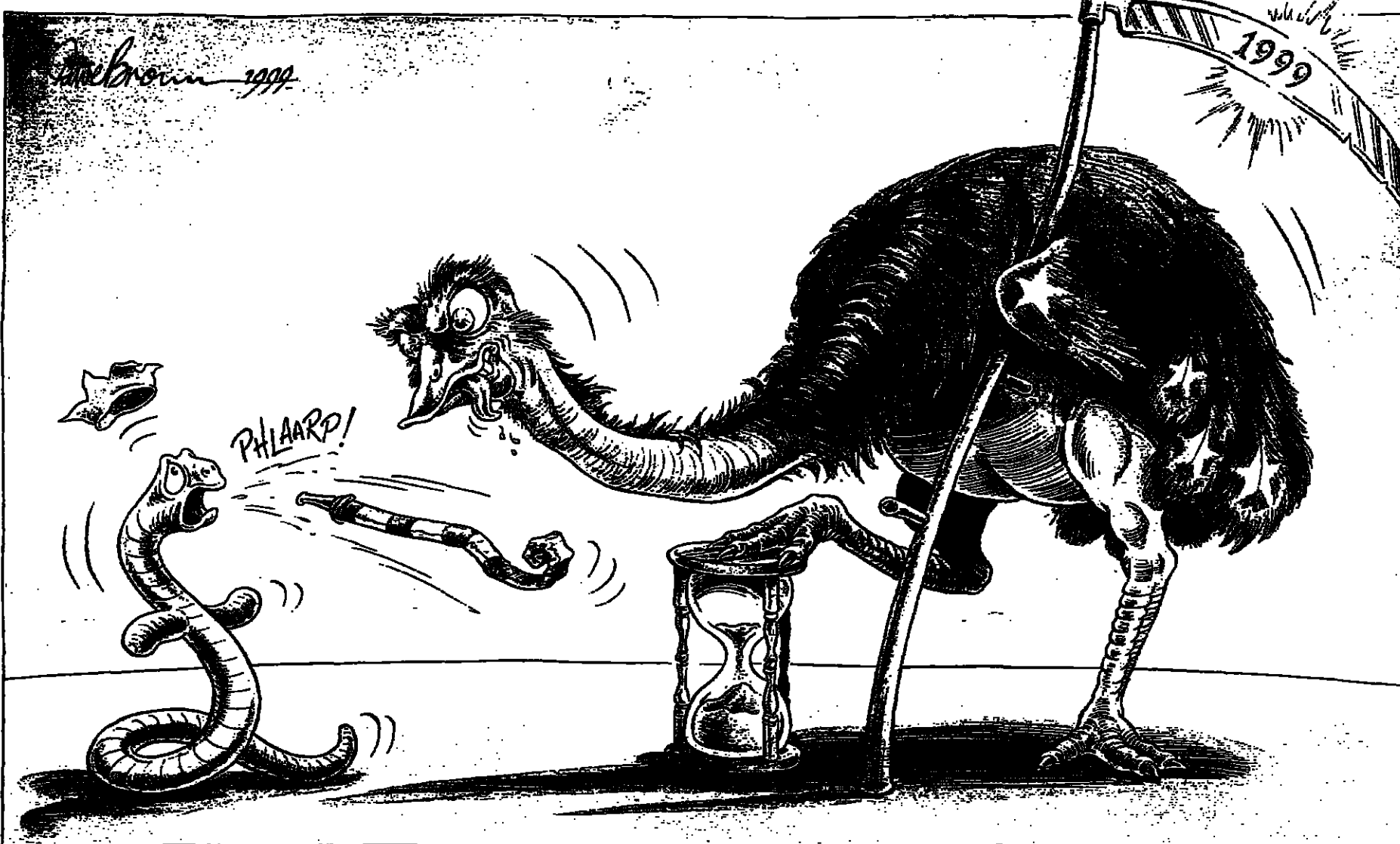
NOTHING MUCH happened at midnight last night (except the odd party), and yet everything changed. The euro was born - and yet this event merely formalises the ties that have bound 11 European currencies for some time. The European Central Bank was already running interest-rate policy for the euro area, engineering last month's cut in rates for all 11 currencies. And the French will carry on using francs and the Germans marks for three-and-a-half more years: euro notes and coins will only be phased in during the first half of 2002. But the euro now exists as a trading and banking currency. British visitors to the Continent will be able to take euro travellers' cheques; their credit card bills will be itemised in euros, and conversion costs will drop. Over time, more and more prices in continental Europe will be shown in the both local currencies and their euro equivalents.

What matters most to Britain about today's calendar flip is that the alarmists have been dished. Half the Eurosceptics said the euro would never happen, and the other half said it would be born into a Europe torn by economic chaos and civil disorder. Even sensible people like John Major and Kenneth Clarke used to say there was a good chance it would not be launched on time. All that turned out to be bunkum. Not just wrong, but silly. The euro is being launched in conditions of organised calm. Most significantly, it arrives with a degree of popular consent which was unexpected just six months ago. The German public, above all, which had long been deeply suspicious of the plan to replace their mark, seems to have accepted the euro with a shrug.

This has implications for Britain, where there is a referendum yet to be won. The arguments are well-known, and some of those against the euro are justified: the European Central Bank is neither open, nor accountable enough; and there are likely to be problems of regional recessions in the euro area which will put pressure on the Brussels budget. However, the gains for Europe's citizens - primarily economic but also cultural - outweigh the doubts. At its worst, the argument for joining is that we would lose by staying out.

It seems that public opinion will only begin to move, however, once joining the euro has become an accepted fact. Britain's membership is taking on an air of inevitability among politicians and commentators - now the Government needs to bring this home to the British people. The Chancellor will this month publish detailed plans for what needs to be done if the decision to join were taken: that much is welcome - but it is not enough.

Tony Blair should move from the negative - there is no constitutional bar to Britain's joining - to the positive - the Government believes it is in Britain's interest to join



the euro. And he should move, as Peter Mandelson did prematurely last year, from "if" to "when". As Geoffrey Howe suggested in *The Independent* yesterday, he should set a target date for British entry. Not only would a date become an anchor in the markets, thus reaping for Britain many of the benefits of monetary union straight away, it would reverse the polarity of popular assumptions - from "out unless, we vote to go in" to "in unless, we vote to stay out". Remember, too, that for continental Europeans the single currency has been a fact since the Maastricht Treaty was signed in December 1991. Even for decimalisation, the changeover date was set in 1966, five years ahead.

Mr Blair should say that the Government wants Britain to be able to join the euro "from 2003". To be sure, a date would be a hostage to fortune. But not setting a date would be worse. The Prime Minister said last month: "When I say that I want Britain to be a leading partner in Europe, engaged in shaping its future, I mean it. And I can deliver it." This year, his boast will be tested.

Don't blame the Yemeni government

IN ALL the discussion of precisely how the hostages were killed in Yemen, we are in danger of forgetting a simple truth. It is not the Yemeni authorities who are primarily to blame for the death of the four tourists but the Islamic Jihad group who seized them in the first place.

On the first accounts of the survivors - although their tales are still confused - it does seem as if the Yemeni troops fired first. No doubt the action could have been carried out more safely. Given the past history of Yemeni hostage-taking, the tourists must have known they were taking risks.

But the crucial point remains: these were western hostages deliberately taken by a fundamentalist group for political ends. The Yemeni authorities couldn't just give in to their demands for the release of their leader from jail

as if this was no different than the ransoms they have agreed with previous hostage-takers in the region.

We have learnt enough from air-hijacking to know that giving in to such demands never works. We have also learnt enough - or should have by now - to treat seizing hostages in this manner as a form of international terrorism, not a peculiar pastime of a wild country. The lessons of air-hijacking are there to be read. There has to be international co-ordination of intelligence and counter-measures. Special forces have to be trained for quick response. But above all, the perpetrators of such actions have to be made to understand that, even if they escape, they will be pursued for decades not just years - each time they travel abroad or use the banking system. Yes, revise the Foreign Office warning system (although they cannot be held responsible for every tourist taking risks abroad). Yes, examine what did happen in the fatal shoot-out in southern Yemen. But don't let that detract from the international effort that is now required.

A resolution for Tony Blair: try not to neglect the Cabinet

AN ESSENTIAL feature of the political pantomime played out during the later Thatcher years and virtually the entire Major regime was that whenever they went abroad the trouble-makers in their party had a ball at home. "When the PM's away the mice come out to play" was the theme of many a political column, as the din of domestic politics disrupted prime ministerial excursions. It would be an exaggeration to say that Tony Blair's holiday in the Seychelles has been wrecked by the post-Mandelson manoeuvrings in Britain. Nonetheless the mice have been out to play this week and there have been some pretty significant games.

Some of the mice, Blair's own cabinet colleagues, sense the freedom of a little political space with the departure of Peter Mandelson. Indeed the sound of ministers burrowing out of their holes, seeking daylight, is the first consequence of the Mandelson affair. For more than four years most of them felt intimidated by the Blair-Mandelson partnership, or were in awe of it. They sat around the top table, uncertain where they stood. Quite unexpectedly the partnership has been broken. Suddenly cabinet ministers have rediscovered some of their own self-confidence.

The interview with John Prescott in *The Independent* on Wednesday was one such example of the new political situation. It is a remarkable document, one which should head straight for the files of those of us chronicling this elusive government day in, day out. For on the surface Prescott is utterly loyal, and yet with-

in a few paragraphs he implies that the emphasis on spin has detracted from the substance of government policy, that ministers were more interventionist than Mandelson ever allowed for at the DTI and that Keynesianism is alive and kicking under New Labour. He insists that Mandelson's departure was not a big event yet the interview demonstrates how big it was. He would not have given precisely the same answers if Mandelson had still been the rising star of the administration.

What is more, he singles out his relationship with Gordon Brown as being much stronger than before, which I can confirm to be the case. A year before the election there was as great a mutual resentment between the two of them as there was between some of the other rivals at the fractious head of New Labour. In government a respect has evolved, not least as a result of the former Treasury minister Geoffrey Robinson acting as a link between them.

A Brown/Prescott alliance is not necessarily a threat to Blair, but it could become one unless he treads carefully on his return. At different times, for different reasons, both of them have had cause to question privately and with fury what has gone on in the prime ministerial court.

Also reviewing the new political landscape will be Robin Cook, who has never had any time for Mandelsonian New Labourism, but felt so weak six months ago that he let the Blairites virtually rewrite a speech he delivered on the Third Way. Recently he has been worried that Mandelson was

breathing down his neck, seeking his job. He was right to be worried. I have no doubt that Mandelson would have been Foreign Secretary under a Blair government in the fullness of time.

Suddenly that burden has been lifted for Cook. He has not become the star he was in opposition overnight, but there will be more of a spring in his stride as the new year begins. Cook has always been the hope of the neo-Keynesians among Labour MPs. With Prescott citing the great economist too, Cook may feel that his cause is not entirely dead.

A little further down the Cabinet others will be reflecting over the New Year. Jack Straw continues to get rave reviews in the media. Can he flex his muscles and scupper for good the PR project which he fiercely opposes? David Blunkett has never been a 100

per cent Blairite and suffered the occasional humiliation at their hands in the early days. Will he sense some room for manoeuvre?

And what about Margaret Beckett, moved from the DTI before many of her policies could be implemented and who has seen some of them revised under Mandelson? And how will Clare Short be feeling now that the most prominent "person in the dark" has failed to survive in the more glamorous and powerful light for more than six months?

These are early days, but Mandelson was such a uniquely powerful figure because his relationship with Blair was so strong, and the dynamics of the Government are bound to change. But any suggestion of a cabinet acting collectively against its leader is way off the mark. While some are united in their wariness of Mandelson's influence on Blair, they are divided among themselves on everything else.

Cook and Short are supporters of FR, while Prescott, Brown and Straw are not. But Cook and Short view each other warily from their overlapping departments. Cook and Brown do not get on still, while Short has been a long-term admirer of Brown and a critic of Prescott. There is ample scope for Blair to divide and rule.

But he needs to make the cabinet feel more involved in the "project" (which Prescott mischievously described only as implementing the manifesto) or else some of them will become rather less docile than they have been since he became leader. We are nowhere near the dying days of

Margaret Thatcher, but she stands as a permanent warning of what happens if a cabinet is neglected. Blair's New Year resolution should be to bring back cabinet government or some of the Cabinet will turn on him.

Now, having made a resolution for the Prime Minister, let me propose a related one to all politicians, before more of them are hounded on to the back benches to join Mandelson: play down the sleaze allegations against your opponents for, sooner or later, you will be hoist with your own petard.

In my last column, which appeared the day before the Mandelson/Robinson story broke, I argued that we expected too much from the private lives of politicians. Within 48 hours two of them were gone from the government for relatively trivial reasons. In the current climate more will be on the back benches before the year is out.

The shame of it is that no one who is gay, wealthy or been anywhere near a bra millionaire will consider a career in politics. Yet we need the best politicians we can get our hands on, so to speak. Most talented politicians could earn far more and enjoy more uninhibited sex in other vocations, but still they are viewed as a bunch of sex-crazed crooks.

Some Tories will suffer but the Government will be rocked more. It is one of the many reasons why this year will be a testing one for the Prime Minister. Blair will need his friends, and will have a much clearer idea of his enemies, by the end of 1999.

Steve Richards is political editor of the *New Statesman*



STEVE RICHARDS
Ministers burrowing out of their holes, seeking daylight, is the first consequence of the Mandelson affair

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
The American press looks back on the old year - and forward to the new one

TALK ABOUT prophetic. We started the year by going nuts over a disaster movie, *Titanic*. By the time 1998 had finally blown over, however, we had coped with plenty of real-life catastrophes, El Niño, Monticagate, embassy bombings, school shootings, flash floods, the Chiefs, even the passing of "Old Blue Eyes".

But more uplifting events occurred, too, such as the (baseball) home-run record race, the return of an astronaut hero

[John Glenn], *Saving Private Ryan*, a resurgent bull market and even - dare we say it? - the introduction of Viagra.

The Kansas City Star

TO LAUNCH the new year, we suggest these proclamations for a select few people:

Linda Tripp: Resolve to find a real job.

All Presidential Hopefuls: Resolve to spend as much time talking to voters as raising campaign contributions.

Bill Gates: Resolve to remember more about your business strategy than President Clinton did about Monica Lewinsky or Ken Starr did about his investigations.

Governor George W Bush: Resolve to print "Compassionate Conservative" T-shirts and follow that motto no matter how rough other party factions play.

The Dallas Morning News

AS TEMPTING as it might be to let 1998 drag its surreal, sorry carcass out the back door without further comment, we present once again our year-end list of winners and losers.

The Golden Spigot Award: The office of independent counsel Kenneth Starr. The last thing we saw leaking that much was the Titanic.

With Friends like these Trophy (female division): Linda Tripp.

With Friends like these Trophy (international division):

Saddam Hussein, whose nasty behaviour kept undercutting French and Russian efforts to lift sanctions against Iraq and end his pariah status.

The W C Fields Award: The Republican convention site selectors, who, on the whole, would rather be in Philadelphia.

Unheeded Wisdom Award: The President's Initiative on Race. It was hard to hear in all the static, but the dialogues and report were useful.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"History's most well-known refugee was a baby called Jesus."
Dr George Carey,
Archbishop of Canterbury

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"A bad beginning makes a bad ending."
Euripides,
Classical Greek playwright

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The chief executive of Business for Sterling replies to Geoffrey Howe's plea for Britain to join the euro

GEOFFREY HOWE does not bother to make an economic case for giving up the pound (*The Independent*, 31 December 1998). He simply falls back on the language of fear: it is inevitable, we will have no influence, so we must join. No mention of the risks, nor the underlying political agenda which is driving the whole project.

But there are powerful economic reasons for Britain to keep our own currency. Our business cycle is different from that of Germany and France. A "one size fits all" European interest rate would be more likely to suit the Continent than us, and the wrong interest rate could be devastating for the British economy.

Our membership of the Exchange Rate Mechanism, urged upon Britain by, among others, Geoffrey Howe, gave us interest rates that were too high. Unemployment doubled, and we set a new record for business bankruptcies. At least we could get out of the ERM. But membership of the single currency would be irreversible.

We cannot and do not want to be excluded from the EU and the Single Market. But if we remain outside Euroland we have a better chance of avoiding the worst aspects of the European Economic model - endemic unemployment; crippling social costs; and an overgrown public sector and the high taxes that go with it.

The threat of tax harmonisation is not exaggerated. It is a clear and present danger to low-tax Britain, as would be the proposed withholding tax on savings, which would be lethal for London's Eurobond market.

The euro is no panacea for Europe's problems - and it could well make them worse.

The truth is that for Britain the economic benefits of joining a regional currency zone would be modest compared with the risks. It would be wrong for us to take this gamble, and even more wrong for the Government to spend public money on preparations for entry before the British people have decided.

Britain can and will prosper, in Europe - but out of Euroland. We will be using the euro as freely as the dollar, and we will be in control of our own affairs.

Get away from me with your puny gongs

PHILIP
HENSHER

Satie remarked that 'M Ravel has refused the Légion d'honneur, but all his works accept it'

hoods and they've done away with the little black book of backbench indiscretions.

And civil servants put up with relatively low levels of pay in exchange for two things: the near-certainty that they are safe from the threat of downsizing, and the hope of the eventual KCB which, when retirement comes, will allow the new Lady

Buggins to make a perfect ass of herself around the village.

All the same, the recipients of honours fall into two categories: those who would kill for another one, and those who frankly wouldn't really know what to do with one. The most conspicuous example of the latter sort of honour this year was the thoroughly well-deserved but somewhat curious award of a damehood to the Duchess of Devonshire. Universally beloved and admirable as she is, one can't help wondering what on earth she is going to do with it, or how exactly she is supposed to be addressed now - Duchess Dame Deborah, perhaps.

The existence of a category of people who wouldn't know what to do with a state honour explains, perhaps, why writers never make much of a showing in the honours lists. It's quite striking that, though writers are at the forefront of our national consciousness, and present one of the most conspicuous faces of Britain to the outside world, they are very rarely awarded any kind of recognition by the state in the honours lists. Peerages are generally

given, not for literary excellence, but as in the case of P D James and Ruth Rendell, for devoted public service; knightships and damehoods are rarely given, and always with an air of an exception being made.

Writers don't get state honours, which, considering that, alone among the arts, they make no demands on the public purse and generate a consistently healthy slice of the economy, might be viewed as rather odd. Painters and sculptors do pretty well: actors, conductors and singers, it seems, need only carry on long enough to pick up a K. But only the very grandest and oldest novelists get anything at all. If Sir Simon Rattle, why not Sir Martin Amis? If Dame Felicity Lott, why not Dame Victoria Glendinning?

The very idea seems absurd, and I think rightly so. I'm not arguing for more recognition for writers, rather the reverse. Paul Theroux's new book about his friendship with V S Naipaul spends a great deal of space on Naipaul's change of mind. According to Theroux, Naipaul in youth argued, rightly, against the

idea of a writer accepting the state's honours, only to take a knightship when it was offered. There is something wrong about the idea of Sir Vidia Naipaul, and I can't be alone in thinking that the author of *The Enigma of Arrival* is not augmented by the possession of a KCB.

It is demeaning on even the best of novelists to accept a bauble like this; the merits of the work, in the end, are going to have to be enough, and ought always to be enough.

Satie is said to have remarked bitchily of Ravel that "M. Ravel has refused the Légion d'honneur; but all his works accept it." How much worse to accept an honour, to be seen as the sort of writer that the government admires and respects; it is almost as deplorable as the award of knightships to the editors of newspapers, an honour which can only diminish the recipient. There are certainly writers who are universally known to be touting for knightships, but they are not writers worthy of anyone's respect, and, if their surreptitious campaigns ever succeeded, it is not likely that the ridicule would cease.

It would really be more sensible if a firm convention arose that writers fell outside the range of the honours system. The award of gongs, all in all, should be seen as what it is, a series of consolation prizes.

If you work in the civil service for not much money and no recognition, you might be glad of the K. Similarly, the preponderance of the performing arts in the lists, the readiness to reward sportsmen ought to be seen less as an attempt to court popularity and more of a consolation for the undeniable fact that they will soon be completely forgotten. Hardly anyone remembers actors, or footballers, or sopranos after their retirement; let them have a cheap bit of recognition for their mantle-pieces.

Writers shouldn't need a consolation prize: their work will be remembered, or forgotten, regardless of a piece of tinsel. Did Blake deserve a knightship? Could the Government of the day have given Dickens, or George Eliot, or Waugh anything which might begin to recognise what they had done? Should it even have tried?

Now we have the euro, it is time to prepare for full political union

JOSEF JOFFE
The euro is like putting the cart before the horse. Either Europe will federate or disintegrate

ON THE first of January - actually, make that the fourth, as the first working day in 1999 - the world will wake up to a genuine revolution, something without precedent in history. It is a common currency, the euro, without a common state.

This has never been tried before. Historically, the sequence was always reversed. Take the 19th century. First, Bismarck had to pound 25 little Germanys into the Reich in 1871 - with "blood and iron", as he famously put it. Only then did a common currency, the mark, follow. Ditto Italy in the days of Cavour and Garibaldi: first political union by force, then a common lira from Milan to Messina. Or the United States. The first step was the constitution in 1787; true monetary union came only 126 years later with the founding of the Federal Reserve (and with a bloody war of unification in between).

So the Europe of the Eleven faces a daunting task. On 1 January, the Eleven will relinquish a big chunk of national sovereignty: the power to manipulate the quantity and the price of money. Nor is this all. Under the Stability Pact, which is part and parcel of European Monetary Union (Emu), the Eleven have also given away a large chunk of fiscal sovereignty. No longer can they go into wanton deficit spending, never mind the national debt. Electorates barely accept such regimes when meted out by their own governments. But now, they will have to submit to those distant, almost anonymous men ennobled in the European Central Bank (ECB) in Frankfurt.

If they do, the euro is safe. But the steady sniping against those "unaccountable" Eurobankers by the likes of German finance minister Oskar Lafontaine already tells of the troubles to come. "Little Napoleon," as his countrymen call him, and his leftish brethren who govern 13 of the

15 EU countries don't like the idea of an ECB that is virtually the German Bundesbank writ large. They want more than just easy money. They want to grab hold of the Eurobank's independence while it is still new and unsure of itself.

This will be one battle line after January 1: politics vs. sound money. The other is just as serious. Will all those governments who just squeaked in under the bar of the Maastricht criteria (low debt, deficit and interest) stay the course of euro-minded virtue? What if, say, the Germans do and the Italians don't? Unless all of these governments behave as if they were already one, conflict among them will put enormous pressures on the "union".

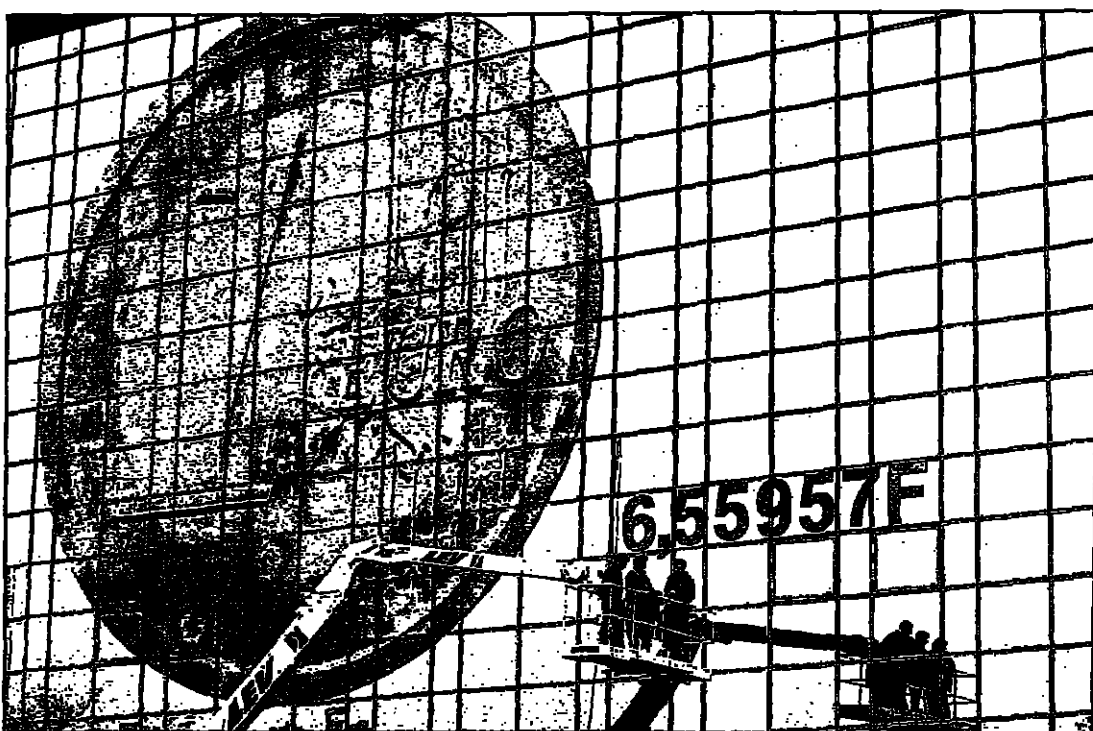
Think about Emu as a train where all the cars must move at the same speed in the same direction at all times. Unless they do, the train will derail. That is the greatest test faced by a monetary union without political union.

But for now, Emu's prospects look much better than could have been expected in March when only very few among the Eleven could make

the cut without having to massage the books. To begin with, the monetary tsunami that crashed through the East Asian economies did not derail the Euro train as it moved toward the 1999 starting line. All currencies remained in tandem and on track.

Also, popular opinion is no longer running against the euro as it did in key countries, notably Germany, since the Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992. Germans are still not happy when contemplating the impending loss of their precious deutschmark. But nowhere in Euroland did the critics manage to turn Emu into a salient issue, let alone a rabble rouser. Because no mainstream party has picked up the anti-euro flag, people have accepted the inevitable. Also, fears have failed to galvanise because nothing will really change for Herr Schmidt and Mme Dupont on January 4. They will still carry deutschmarks and francs all the way into January 1, 2002. In the meantime, the euro will enjoy a fairly easy trial run. Because they are either anticipating a "hard" euro or continued political turmoil in Washington, the money markets are depressing the dollar, which strengthens the currencies of the Eleven. That should build trust in the euro and even turn it into a new reserve money rivaling the dollar. Inside Euroland, Emu will do wondrous things for large banks and insurance companies. Obviously, if all stocks, bonds and policies traded between Lisbon and Leipzig are denominated in one currency only, then sheltered national markets will collapse, burying previously favoured niche players.

There will be one big playing field where Herr Schmidt and Mme Dupont can suddenly pick among Fiat, VW, Renault and Seat shares whereas in the past they used to cling to their familiar national car makers.



Unveiling the new conversion rate of franc to euro at a Paris bank yesterday Michael Lipchitz

That will make for more efficient capital markets and perhaps even jog the EU's lagging growth rates.

In general, the euro will simply add to the pressures of the global market. Giants like Siemens or Credit Lyonnais, previously favoured by national habits and policies, will have to compete in a much more transparent market. That should be good for the consumer, as it will drive down prices.

This is the upside of the euro. The downside is the familiar one. You can't really have a common currency without a common government. At least it has never been done before. So the euro is like putting the cart before the horse. Either Europe will have to federate - or it will disintegrate.

Why so? The modern nation state is inextricably tied up with the sovereign's control over the purse. Indeed this is how the modern nation state came about in Britain and France in the 16th and 17th centuries - when Henrys and Louis grabbed hold of the public finances with the help of their Wolseys and Colberts.

Monetary union will wrest this critical piece of sovereignty from the hands of several states. They can no longer manipulate the exchange rate to stimulate exports. Nor will they be able to pump up the money supply in order to stimulate investments. Under the Stability Pact, they can't even do the Keynesian thing: go into heavy deficit spending to drive down employ-

ment. This is why the euro is a make-or-break affair.

Either the EU's member states go all the way and federate in a United States of Europe, or they claim back what they have relinquished at Maastricht in a fit of absent-mindedness: their sovereignty over monetary and fiscal policy. But this strange being spawned by Maastricht - monetary union without political union - cannot endure.

Think about trains where each car has its own engine and engineer. Either they all act as one, or the couplings will break and the train will derail.

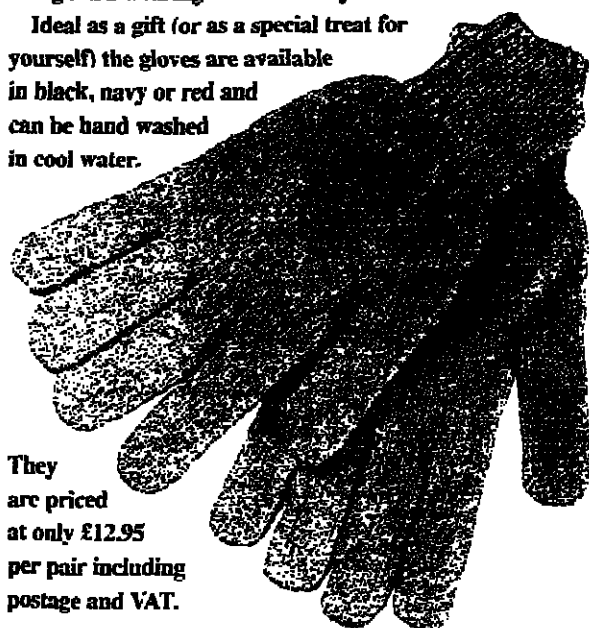
The author is the editorial page editor of 'Süddeutsche Zeitung' in Munich

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ON THIS New Year's morning, looking back at disorderly 1998, all its 365 limbs now played out in a fatally hung-over heap on the scruffy sheets of history, the temptation is simply to leave it there. Shut the door. And throw away the key. But, no, the temptation to take one last glance over the year is too great to resist. Here are Pandora's 12 Greatest Hits of 1998.

IT WAS the greatest mystery of Princess Diana's will, but it took Pandora to question why, with a total bequest of £21,711,486, not a single penny was earmarked for charity? (9 March)

POOR DERRY Irvine (pictured) faced a huge and unforeseen personal tax bill for the controversial improvements, decoration and new furniture that were deemed necessary for his Lord Chancellor's apartments, according to the implications of a statement from Treasury Minister Dawn Primarolo. (20 March)

PANDORA WAS first to notice that Mohamed Al Fayed had begun to wear a glamorous custom-made wig that replicated the hairdo of his former press-spokesman, Michael Cole. (27 March)

LORD CHANCELLOR Irvine presented the "Freedom of Information Awards" in the City, striking Pandora as a bit rich since Derry had required his own curtain-weavers to sign the Official Secrets Act. (9 April)

THE BRITISH Embassy in Washington DC hosted Sinn Féin's Gerry Adams to lunch but, Pandora revealed, had never invited any of the officers of the US branch of the British Labour Party to enjoy its hospitality. (17 April) Months later, Pandora exclusively reported that Ambassador Sir Christopher Meyer and his wife, at the end of his first year in office, had hosted a splendid gala dinner to celebrate their first wedding anniversary - at the British taxpayers' expense. (3 November)

PANDORA WAS first to see that the newly ennobled Lord Bragg would be forced to resign from his job as presenter of Radio 4's *Start The Week* because of a possible political conflict of interest. (7 July)

FOLLOWING HIS fall from grace in the "Cronygate" scandals, Derek Draper's University of Manchester student political career - variously described by his peers as "criminal", "out of control" and "mad" - was recounted by Pandora. (9 July)

PANDORA DISCOVERED that ballot papers for Labour's National Executive Committee election were numbered, making a "secret election" rather unlikely. (27 August)

AT THE height of Pandora's widely supported Anti-Rucksack On The Tube Campaign, a reader sent in the shocking story of a young man who narrowly escaped death when a luggage lout bumped him off the platform at Leicester Square underground station. (28 August)

A LETTER from Lionel Jospin, Prime Minister of France, came to Pandora's

exclusive attention. It seemed the French PM had turned down the invitation to attend Blair and Clinton's "Third Way" seminar in New York, finding the whole affair absurd. (8 September)

SNIFFER DOGS were being used by British Transport police to indiscriminately screen commuters, including Pandora, at London's Camden Town tube station. This was part of "a new general initiative to crack down on crime", later deplored by civil libertarians. (10 September) Former Tory Prime Minister Sir Edward Heath was not, in fact, a fully paid-up member of the Conservative Party. (6 October) After discovering that the Nobel authorities in Norway had booked the Irish band The Cranberries for a December concert, Pandora's source revealed - accurately - that the Nobel Peace Prize would be shared among several Irish peacemakers. (13 October)

A FENG-SHUI expert, Rosalyn Dexter, had been invited to inspect the inside of 10 Downing Street and offer her New Age comments on the furnishing arrangements. Pandora first disclosed. (11 November)

Bryan MacLean

BRYAN MACLEAN, guitarist and vocalist in the cult American psychedelic band Love, wrote the seminal Sixties classic "Alone Again Or" and recorded three albums still revered by critics and connoisseurs. Trivia fans only realised that the Californian musician had nearly been one of the Monkees last August when Channel 4 aired Ian MacMillan's fine documentary *Daydream Believers*.

Born in Los Angeles in 1947, MacLean drifted towards the music scene and became a roadie for the Byrds. In the mid-Sixties, the tall blond musician would hang out at Ben Frank's, a 24-hour diner on Hollywood's Sunset Strip. As he recalled on television, "Bobby Jameson, a friend of mine, told me about the audition for the Monkees. He said: 'You ought to go down there, you're what they're looking for. You'll make \$750 a week.' That was an enormous amount. But he didn't tell me that it was comedy," explained MacLean. "So I went down there being the hip, street-wise guy, gravelling my voice, and it was wrong. Thank God it was the wrong approach. They got the impression I was a seriously 'drugged-out' guy."

In retrospect, MacLean didn't dwell too much on his failure to edge out Peter Tork or Mike Nesmith and take part in American television's manufactured answer to the Fab Four. Disparagingly, he claimed: "The Monkees were extremely square. They just jumped on the bandwagon. It had nothing to do with what was really going on. It was the *Keystone Cops* of rock. I didn't belong in the Monkees or, if I did, I'm still in denial about it." He joked somewhat nervously: "If I ever find out that I belonged in the Monkees, then I will probably have a legitimate nervous breakdown," and went on, "I think that I really belonged in something that involved pioneering music, something that wasn't popular yet. My goal for my music was always timelessness."

MacLean more than succeeded in this aim with Love, a band who rank alongside the Velvet Underground and the Ramones when it comes to influencing successive generations of musicians (REM, House of Love, the Stone Roses).

Again, MacLean met Arthur Lee at Ben Frank's. The Memphis-born musician had already cut a single with the LAGs before moving on to the American Four with the guitarist Johnny Echols. The three joined forces and, adding the rhythm section of Johnny Fleckenstein and Don Conka (soon replaced by the bassist Ken Forssi and drummer Alban "Snoopy" Pfisterer), became the Grass Roots.

Having made their live debut at Brave New World in LA in April 1965, the group changed its name to avoid confusion with another Grass Roots (of "Let's Live For Today" fame).

Given the flower-power movement emerging on the West Coast, the five musicians opted for Love and attracted the attention of Jac Holzman in early 1966. The entrepreneur had already established Elektra Records on the East Coast as the natural home of the folk scene with artists like Judy Collins but he wanted to move the label towards the rock underground. Love's unique brand of folk and demented psychedelia more than fitted the bill. "Thirty seconds into their version of 'Hey Joe', I knew this was the group I was looking for," claimed Holzman, who would later sign the Doors at Lee's instigation.

Love became the first rock band on Elektra and released a stunning version of Burt Bacharach and Hal David's "My Little Red Book" (from *What's New Pussycat?*) in April 1966. Following their appearance on *American Bandstand*, the single and ensuing debut album (simply entitled *Love*) both made the US Top 60 and the following 45, the frantic "Seven and Seven Is", did even better, reaching No 33 in September. "Love was what is lovingly referred to as an underground, a garage band. We had a following but it was underground. It wasn't meant to appeal to as many people as the Monkees' music was," reflected MacLean, who wrote the lovely "Softly To Me" on the first album.

Wearing ribbons in his hair, the more introspective MacLean was the ideal foil to Arthur Lee's frenzied genius and Love became darlings of the hippie scene. Living in their communal Los Angeles "Castle" (actually a decaying mansion previously used as a horror movie set), they recruited Taj Cantrell on flute and Michael Stuart on drums while "Snoopy" Pfisterer moved to keyboards to flesh out the group's rich-



'We were competing a bit like Lennon and McCartney': MacLean, right, with Arthur Lee, on his right, and Love in the mid-Sixties
Michael Ochs Archives / Redferns

album chart in the UK while "Alone Again Or", the eerie, evanescent MacLean composition, entered the US Hot 100. Covered by the Damned in 1986, "Alone Again Or" proved the swansong of the original Love as the idiosyncratic Lee kept playing mind games with MacLean.

During a very strange interview in 1992, Lee told me: "We were competing a bit like Lennon and McCartney to see who would come up with the better song. It was part of our charm. Everybody had different behaviour patterns. Eventually, the others couldn't cut it." Lee sacked

By the Nineties, the erratic Arthur Lee was displaying paranoid tendencies and symptoms of Parkinson's disease. In 1996, following several arrests and convictions, he was jailed for 12 years for threatening behaviour with a firearm. Bryan MacLean crawled back from the wreckage. His half-sister, Maria McKee, made several records with Lone Justice, including a song by MacLean, "Don't Toss Us Away", in 1985, which three years later became a Top 10 country music hit for Patty Loveless. In 1997, the Sundazed label released *Alone Again Or*, a collection of solo acoustic MacLean demos culled from the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties. His odd quavering vocals remained as compelling as ever and also came to the fore in his born-again incarnation.

"I started making music again when I felt comfortable to move back into writing without violating my stand for Christ," Bryan MacLean told Ian MacMillan. "Love grows in me when I proclaim all that my Lord has done. I'm now writing worship music that's presented in an ethereal genre. Celtic, spacy, no guitars. I call it spooky Christian music, spooky worship music."

"If a person is a Satanist or a Buddhist or a Hindu, they will be able to listen to this music and not be put off by it because it's the universal longing to be in the spirit realm that's being expressed."

PIERRE PERRONE
Bryan MacLean, guitarist, singer and songwriter; born Los Angeles 25 September 1946; died Los Angeles 25 December 1998.

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Jean-Claude Forest

SEX IN space was no problem in the fantasy Fifties when science-fiction comic strips were rigidly researched in the interplanetary knowledge of the time. Dan Dare, *Eagle's* "Pilot of the Future", was rooted solidly in his creation by the Rev Marcus Morris as Daniel Dare, Padre of the Future. One of Dare's space team, Professor Peabody, christened Jocelyn Mabel and known as "Prof", may have had a pretty face but the rest of her was covered in a spacesuit. In American comics Buck Rogers zoomed around the 21st century with a blonde lady called Allura, but legs apart (if you pardon the expression) she too was wrapped in head-hugging helmet and rocket-powered flying belt. It took the French, then as now the great porno-production country, to take the first pioneering steps into sexual space. The cartoonist was Jean-Claude Forest and his heroine was Barbarella.

Forest created "Barbarella" as a full-page serial strip (and strip is the operative word) for the Parisian magazine *V*, back in 1962. On sale in London after the Second World War, this picture paper was a popular buy for teenagers, carrying as it did spicy pin-ups, scantier-clad than their native counterparts. These were both photographic and drawn, the latter in a style somewhat sexier and livelier than in the English magazines of the day such as *Men Only*, *Lilliput* and *Health and Efficiency*.

The nearest thing in Britain to "Barbarella" was Norman Pett's genuinely glamorous "Jane" in the *Daily Mirror*. But Jane never ventured into outer space. Forest's girl of tomorrow was truly liberated, needing no cumbersome spacesuit to survive in the vastness of space. A pair of droopy pantomime boots and an even droopier bikini were all she needed to protect herself from every spacial hazard from meteorites to monstrosities.

The strip gained huge popularity and in 1964 the first set of strips was reprinted as a book by the French publishers Frank Lofsted. Two years later Grove Press translated an edition for America. Meanwhile the French authorities, anxious that their country would not become the world's publishing centre for pornography once again, banned it. The US edition escaped

censure and *Newsweek* reviewed Forest's strip thus:

Cruising among the planets like a female James Bond, Barbarella vanquishes evil and rewards, in her own particular way, all the handsome men she meets in outer space. And whether she is tussling with Strlana the sadistic hunter, or turning her ray-gun on weird gelatinous monsters, she just cannot seem to avoid losing part or all of her skin-tight spacesuit.

Forest was born in Le Perreux, a Parisian suburb, in 1930. At the age of 16 he attended the Ecole des Arts et Metiers in Paris, and whilst there he adapted Robert Louis Stevenson's novel *The Black Arrow* into a strip cartoon. In 1952 he became a staff cartoonist for the weekly boys' comic *Vaillant*, drawing two serial strips, "Pour la Honde", set in the prehistoric period, and "Copyright", which told the adventures of a fantastic animal. In 1958 Forest became the cover artist for several magazines, and took over the drawing for two popular strips of American origin: "Bicot", the French title for "Winnie the Pooh", and "Charlot", the continuing cartoon adventures of Charlie Chaplin. Nineteen fifty-nine found him graduating from children's comics to newspaper strips when he joined the daily *France Soir*.

In 1963, Forest created his classic "Barbarella". In style this is still one of the best-drawn strips in the fantasy genre, despite the total impossibility of the situations. Forest paid no attention at all to current scientific space research. Instead readers of *V Magazine* enjoyed Barbarella's imaginative circumstances and her pleasures of the flesh.

Barbarella was filmed in 1968 by Roger Vadim, and shot young Jane Fonda to international fame. She looked the perfect living reproduction of the bosomy, leggy lovely, and her adventure in a mad professor's orgasmic stimulator marks a sexy cinema. The film's look, a brilliant transference of strip-cartooning to live action, was due to Forest who Vadim hired to supervise its design.

Forest's cartoon career expanded enormously after the world-wide success of the film. He was made editor of a new comics magazine for adult readership, *Chouchou*, for which he created another glib series called "Baby Cyanide". In 1965 he created an animated cartoon series for French television. Again in his favourite mixture of science-fiction and sexy girls, this featured a teenager called Marie Math.

Despite this enterprise Forest's career began to decline, perhaps because he concentrated almost solely on sex and sci-fi. Maybe real life space travel made such wild imaginings less popular with the public. However his creation of Barbarella as both cartoon and film ensures him a place in the pantheon of the great comic strippers of the century.

DENIS GIFFORD

Jean-Claude Forest, cartoonist; born Le Perreux, France 11 September 1930; married (one son); died 30 December 1998.



Creator of Barbarella

Roy Powell



Gentle Goliath

A "WHO'S WHO" of rugby league players, published when he was in his prime in 1991, described Roy Powell as a "workaholic runner and tackler with under-estimated ball-playing skills". They could have gone on to say that he was one of the best players of his generation; proof that the old sporting cliché, the gentle giant, really could survive and thrive even in so unforgiving a game.

Powell joined Leeds in 1983, from the St John Fisher junior club in his native Dewsbury, and within a couple of seasons was a regular member of their pack. From the start, his trademarks were his work-rate and his tackling - hard, low and scrupulously fair. If he had a failing, it was

that he never seemed particularly to enjoy hurting opponents; he did so, of course, but it was not the object of the exercise. A succession of coaches tried to put a little more "devil" into him, but had to admit, like Peter Fox, who relied on him for Leeds, Bradford and Yorkshire, that it just wasn't in his nature.

He prospered despite that, flourishing into an impressive second-row forward in a Leeds team that was almost, but not quite, good enough to win things. With Paul Medley and David Heron, he made up a backrow that was a good balance of running, creativity and tackling. Powell was the tackler and there were few better. He was first capped for Great

Britain, as a substitute against France, by Maurice Bamford in 1985, but it was under the coaching of Malcolm Reilly that he became a fixture in the Test team.

On the 1988 tour of Australia, he was one of the few British forwards to command respect and he shared in the euphoria of beating the Aussies for the first time in 10 years, when Great Britain defied all expectations to win 26-12 at the Sydney Football Stadium.

In 1990, he was an immensely popular member of the British party that first made a full-scale tour of Papua New Guinea. As a big, black player, Powell was an object of fascination to the local fans, who mobbed him

wherever he went. Being regarded as almost an honorary fellow countryman made it a demanding few weeks, but he coped with the attention with his customary cheerfulness. "Physically, he was a Goliath," said Reilly. "I told him to walk about stripped to the waist to intimidate them, but they loved him."

Powell also figured on the New Zealand leg of that tour, as well as the home series against Australia - including the victory at Wembley - later that same year. He made his final Test appearance, again as a substitute, against France in 1991.

A few months later, Peter Fox signed him for Bradford Northern for £20,000, his departure from Leeds

causing a storm of protest from their supporters. Fox knew what he would get from Powell and his efforts helped them into the final of the Regal Trophy the following season.

For the third time in that competition, Powell was on the losing side; indeed, the Yorkshire Cup with Leeds in 1988-89 remained his only domestic honour until earlier this year. That was when, following a stint with Featherstone, he helped Batley - without a trophy for over 40 years - to win the inaugural Trans-Pennine Cup. He caused great concern in the final against Oldham when he was unconscious for 20 minutes.

This winter, Powell was on the move again, following his great

friend Deryck Fox, with whom he played at St John Fisher, Bradford, Featherstone and Batley, as well as for Great Britain, to Rochdale, where, at the age of 33, he was going to help with the coaching as well as play.

It was whilst walking across a field to start a training session that he collapsed and died, a piece of news that will have ruined Christmas for wherever anyone knew Roy Powell, as a player or as a person.

DAVE HADFIELD

Roy Colin Powell, rugby league player; born Dewsbury, West Yorkshire 30 April 1965; married (one son, one daughter); died Rochdale 27 December 1998.

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

CRITCHLOW: On 11 December 1998, at home, Idris Bill, Kent, to Sarah and Julien, a son, Robert James, a brother for Daniel and Megan.

"NOTES" return on Monday 4 January the LAW REPORT / CASE SUMMARIES on Monday 11 January

FORTHCOMING MARRIAGES

Mr V.R. Golding and Miss V.E. Heller
The engagement is announced between Vincent, elder son of Mr and Mrs E. Golding, of Canterbury, and Vivienne, elder daughter of Mr G. Heller, of Winchester, and Mrs S. Heller, of Southampton.

Mr M.J. Tomlinson and Miss R.V. Mynors
The engagement is announced between Michael,

elder son of Dr Howard and Dr Heather Tomlinson, of Harley Court, Hereford, and Frances, second daughter of Sir Richard and Lady Mynors, of Treago, St Leonards, Herefordshire.

BIRTHDAYS

Dr Jack Birks, former managing director of BP 79; Mr Alister Campbell, rugby player, 39; Lord Colwyn, dental surgeon and jazz trumpeter, 57; Miss Valentina Cortese, actress, 75; Mrs Christine

Crawley, MER 49; Mr Richard Gibson, actor, 44; Lord Kingsland QC, former MER 57; Baroness Lloyd of Highbury, paediatrician, 71; Sir Albert McQuarrie, former MER 80; Miss Zena Marshall, actress, 72; Dr James Merriman, former Chairman, National Computing Centre, 84; Mr James Moorhouse, MER 75; Col Patrick Porteous VC, 81; Mr Lawrence Rowe, cricketer, 50; Mr J.D. Salinger, writer, 80; Lord Swansea, marksman, 74.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Lorenzo de Medici, statesman, 1449; Maria Edgeworth, novelist, 1767; Arthur Hugh Clough, poet, 1819; Sir James George Frazer, anthropologist, 1854; Edward Morgan Forster, novelist, 1879; Joe Orton (John Kingsley Orton), playwright, 1933. Deaths: Johann Christian Bach, composer, 1782; Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens, architect, 1944; Maurice Chevalier, entertainer, 1972; Lord David Cecil, writer, 1986; Lafayette Ronald Hubbard (L. Ron Hubbard), pro-

pounder of Scientology, 1986. On this day: the importation of slaves into the US was forbidden, 1808; Britain proclaimed sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, 1833; London was divided into 10 postal districts, 1858; Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India, 1877; the first postal orders were issued in Great Britain, 1881; in Britain, people of 70 and over became eligible for old age pensions, 1909; Labour exchanges came into operation, 1910; the British Board of Film Censors was given powers to operate, 1913; the

Soviet Union was established, 1923; British railways were nationalised, 1948; the European Economic Community came into being, 1958; Great Britain, the Irish Republic and Denmark joined the EEC, 1973. Today is New Year's Day and the Feast Day of St Almachius or Telemachus, St Clarus, St Concoridus of Spoletto, St Eugendus or Oyend, St Euphrosyne, St Felix of Bourges, St Fulgentius of Ruspe, St Mochua or Cuan, St Odilo, St Peter of Atroa and St William of Saint Benignus.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Pub closed? Try the minicab office

ONE OF the marvellous things about alcohol is that it lands you in the strangest circumstances, which you accept as perfectly normal at the time. Until the next morning, when you think, "How did we end up in a bowling alley with that horse?"

This is why New Year's Eve is often less debauched than its image. The drinking is planned, expected and excused. For most of us, our most memorable session probably took place on a date that we can't remember, lasting 14 hours and ending on a night with someone who claimed to be a professional wrestler, after we'd popped out in the afternoon for a cauliflower.

The festive Leicester Square party which I was going to write about began to disintegrate at about half past two, until there were a dozen of us left. It's the crackpot licensing law which makes it so hard to leave a bar that's still serving after 11. You pathetically beg for a last drink from a dismissive landlord, who carries on emptying his till with the nonchalant cruelty of a medieval judge ignoring a peasant's plea to not be burned

at the stake. You consider the people who aren't lucky enough to be in a place that's still serving and, using the same logic as mothers who tell their children to eat their carrots because there are starving people in the world, you decide that to not have another would be immoral.

Suddenly, you look around and the bustling crowd has gone. In its place are a handful of people collecting coats, and a beleaguered barman stacking glasses. It was at this point, dispersing onto the street at last week's party, that someone said, "Does anyone fancy a pint?"

What a magnificent thing to say when you've been drinking for the last six hours; worthy of the line in *The Hustler* when, after 24 hours of consecutive pool, Paul Newman says to Minnesota Fats, "Let's play some pool."

This is the point at which sessions turn. While in every other area of life I discount anything mystic, with drinking this point revolves entirely around fate. Once, on a crowded train, I realised I was squashed next to an old friend, who

insisted I join him for a drink. We stopped after three pints but, as we were leaving, bumped into my friend's next-door neighbour who was returning a stepladder he'd borrowed from the barman. And he insisted that we both join him for a drink. I have no idea what, but something that night was guiding us to a paralytic stupor and there was no point in fighting it. Let's see Carol Vorderman explain that!

And last week, at 3am, we stumbled into a minicab office, sturrying asking whether they knew anywhere that was still open. "Why, yes," answered the cab controller, "you could come in here."

So we each paid four pounds, and walked up some rickety wooden stairs into a room that stank of damp and was pitch black, except for the flickering multicoloured rays springing from the fruit machine in the corner. Any sober person passing through the door would have concluded that they'd been kidnapped by the Hezbollah, and that they were destined to the next seven years chained to the fruit machine (though Terry Waite wasn't asked to pay

MARK STEEL



ON LOCATION

four quid first). But we were already drunk so, spotting a barely visible Rastafarian who was dancing despite there being no music, selling tins of Hofmeister at three quid each, we all thought, "What a result!", and congratulated ourselves.

None of us, or the other 15 or so already there, thought it at all strange that this place existed above a minicab office. What would have had to happen for us to think something was odd? Somebody releasing a flock of canaries, perhaps? Mel Gibson

uni-cycling? And who were these people sat cosily in a dark corner, as if it were their local? Maybe they'd been there for hundreds of years, having sold their soul in the Middle Ages, destined to drink one tin of Hofmeister every hour in the dark for all eternity.

It seems so unlikely, as the indecipherable chatter bounces past, that normal life can be carrying on. Right now, as you're fumbling for the money to buy a tin for a bloke who reckons he knows Peter O'Toole, people are sleeping and snoring and dreaming, unaware that a few miles away there's a rickety staircase which leads, Narnia-like, to another world. It seems quite plausible that upon leaving, you'll wish someone a happy new year, and they'll reply, "But it's August 5th, and the year is 2036."

These thoughts occur because 4am drunk is very different from 11pm drunk. The stage of falling over and demanding more chilli sauce is replaced by a misty haze of contemplation. By this time, with great application and patience, odd tasks can be accomplished. I remember

studying the eager flashing lights which were frenetically demanding an urgent decision about which blurred and slowly rocking grapes or cherries I should nudge. Instead of mindlessly thwacking a button at random, like an 11pm drunk, I carefully surveyed the terrain as if it was a crucial move in a game of chess, eventually securing a line of grapes and £1.60 for a £31 stake. "I've taken this place to the cleaners," I thought.

Another aspect of being 4am drunk in a bizarre venue, is the smug satisfaction at having stayed the distance. As we raised the Hofmeister deliberately and proudly to our lips, everyone in that room felt a bond, as if we'd canoed together up the Amazon.

Who knows what internal clock finally lifts you from the broken chair and propels you home. But at some time around five I gave up, wondering when this place actually shut. And if, when it happens, the barman shouts, "Come along now please, it's 20 to seven, get it down you." While customers groan, "Can't we have one last one for the road?"

So I climbed into a minicab

ordered from the Hezbollah room, with a fellow drinker I'd never met before who was mumbled "Peckham" at the driver. "Whereabouts in Peckham?" the driver asked. "I don't know," said my companion. "You're the bloody cab driver. Don't you know?"

But maybe the place has a future. All it would take is a visiting celebrity or two to stumble in there, and they'd probably imagine it was the most happening gig in London. Within a year there'd be a chain of chic minicab-themed nightclubs across America called POBs, owned by Sylvester Stallone. Stars like Cher would walk in and scream. "Oh that lighting, that sort of can't-see-buggerall effect, is simply to die for." Club managers would scour London for authentic rickety stairs. Hofmeister would be sold in frosty glass bottles with a slice of tomato in the top for eight quid each, and the Unique Selling Point would be that you never actually got the drink. Instead, whenever you asked for it, the waiter would say "All right mate, calm down, be with you in about another five minutes."

STARS AND PLANETS: JANUARY

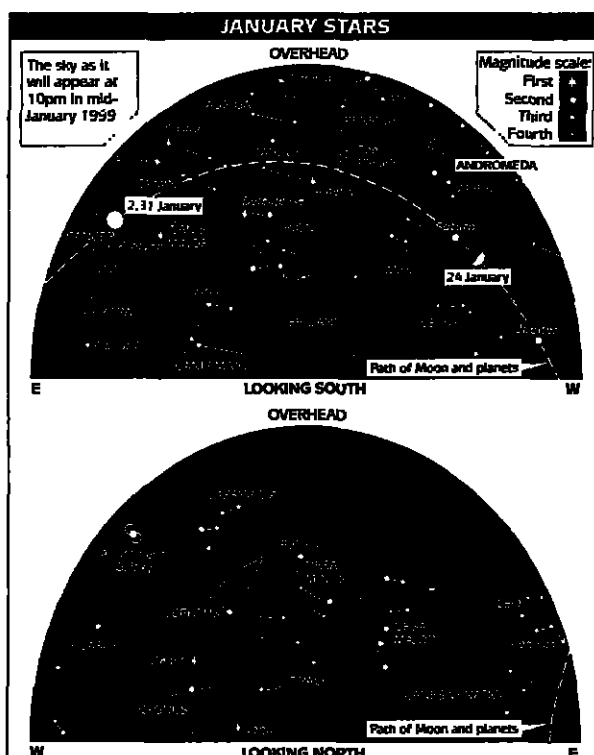
BROTHER CADFAEL might be the best person to assist astronomers perplexed by the "mystery of the missing medieval supernova". It seems that an exploding star of the 13th century should have been as brilliant as the full moon - yet no one reported seeing it.

The first clues to this ancient event came late in 1998, when the Rosat orbiting observatory picked up an unexpected source of natural X-rays in the constellation Vela. This hot bubble of gas looked like the remains of a supernova (an exploding star). Astronomers already knew hundreds of these "supernova remnants", so the new discovery at first looked like just one more for the list.

But this supernova remnant, known only by the catalogue number J08520-462, proved to be rather unusual. First, it was so small and hot that the explosion must have taken place very recently in astronomical terms, where most things take millions of years to happen. Secondly, Bernd Aschenbach, of Germany's Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics, has found that this supernova remnant lies comparatively near the Sun, only a few hundred light years away (right on our doorstep, in a galaxy which is 100,000 light years across).

When a supernova explodes, it shines more brilliantly than 500 million suns, and for several weeks. Aschenbach and his colleagues calculate that the supernova that blew the hot bubble J08520-462 should have appeared in the century AD1200-1300, and it would have shone as brilliantly as the full moon: bright enough to read a newspaper by, if newspapers had been invented then.

Did such a star actually appear in our skies? There are no records of such a brilliant object from Western Europe, even



though Brother Cadfael's colleagues in a Swiss monastery did record a dimmer supernova in the year AD1006. Even more telling, Chinese astronomers of the time scrutinised the sky every night for astrological portents. They reported half a dozen supernovae, none anywhere as bright as the full moon. As well as the supernova of 1006, the Chinese saw exploding stars in 1054, 1181, 1572 and 1604. The remains of all these supernovae have been identified, and none of them was responsible for the remnant J08520-462.

We can certainly conclude there was no star as bright as the full moon in the 13th century. Paul Murdin, of the British National Space Centre, says these negative

sightings are clues as valuable as Sherlock Holmes's "dog that didn't bark in the night". They prove that a star can explode without a brilliant display of light.

Most supernovae are stars at the end of their lifetime. As the core at the very centre collapses, the outer parts of the star detonate and blast out into space. A few supernovae are something different: a small star, called a white dwarf, that blows apart like a massive cosmic nuclear bomb. Both are brilliant sights.

Murdin suggests the explosion that gave rise to J08520-462 must have been different. Perhaps it was the explosion of a star even smaller than a white dwarf, of a type known as a neutron star. A neutron star

might put all its energy into flying shrapnel, instead of a brilliant fireball. Or it might have been a different kind of explosion altogether. Perhaps a neutron star was engulfed by a neighbouring black hole: the energy-packed contents of the neutron star erupted into space, but little light escaped before the star's remains were swallowed up by the black hole.

So far, no definitive answer has emerged. But, one way or the other, the silence of medieval records is pointing us towards new discoveries at the cutting edge of astronomy.

WHAT'S UP: There are two full moons this month. Strictly speaking, a month is the period the moon takes to wax and wane - the word itself derives from "moonth". But the interval between full moons is 29.5 days, so a calendar month can occasionally contain two full moons: the last one was July 1996.

In the first week of the New Year, look out for the Quadrantid meteors, which reach a maximum on the night of 3-4 January. These shooting stars spread out from a point near the tail of the Great Bear (Ursa Major). The meteor shower is named after the constellation of Quadrans Muralis - an archaic astronomical instrument which has long since been abandoned.

Jupiter and Saturn are well visible in the evening sky, over to the south-west. Jupiter is brighter than any of the stars, while Saturn - to its left - is dimmer and distinctly yellow.

Around midnight, reddish Mars rises in the east. At the moment, it's no more brilliant than many stars, but is getting brighter as Earth and Mars head for closest approach in April. Towards the end of January, you may spot the most brilliant planet of all, Venus, low in the west after sunset.

HEATHER COUPER AND NIGEL HENBEST

DIARY			
2nd	2.50am	Full moon	
3rd	1pm	Earth at perihelion (closest to Sun); 10pm maximum of Quadrantid meteor shower	
9th	2.23pm	Moon at last quarter	
17th	3.47pm	New moon	
24th	7.16pm	Moon at first quarter	
31st	4.07pm	Full moon	

The chilling knock that came twice

The avalanche deaths this week stirred painful memories of a father and brother lost in similar tragedies. By Nicola Barry

THE WAITING is the worst. Hearing of a climbing accident on the news, knowing a relative is out there. The terrible fear the eternal waiting, the late night knock on the door, the uncontrollable panic.

I have heard that knock twice in my life. The first time was when my father died in the hills. The second when my brother, Richard, was killed in an avalanche - almost identical to the one this week.

I was with a friend when I heard four young climbers from Kent had been killed in an avalanche on Annapurna, near Ben Nevis, and three had survived, buried under a few feet of snow for 16 hours.

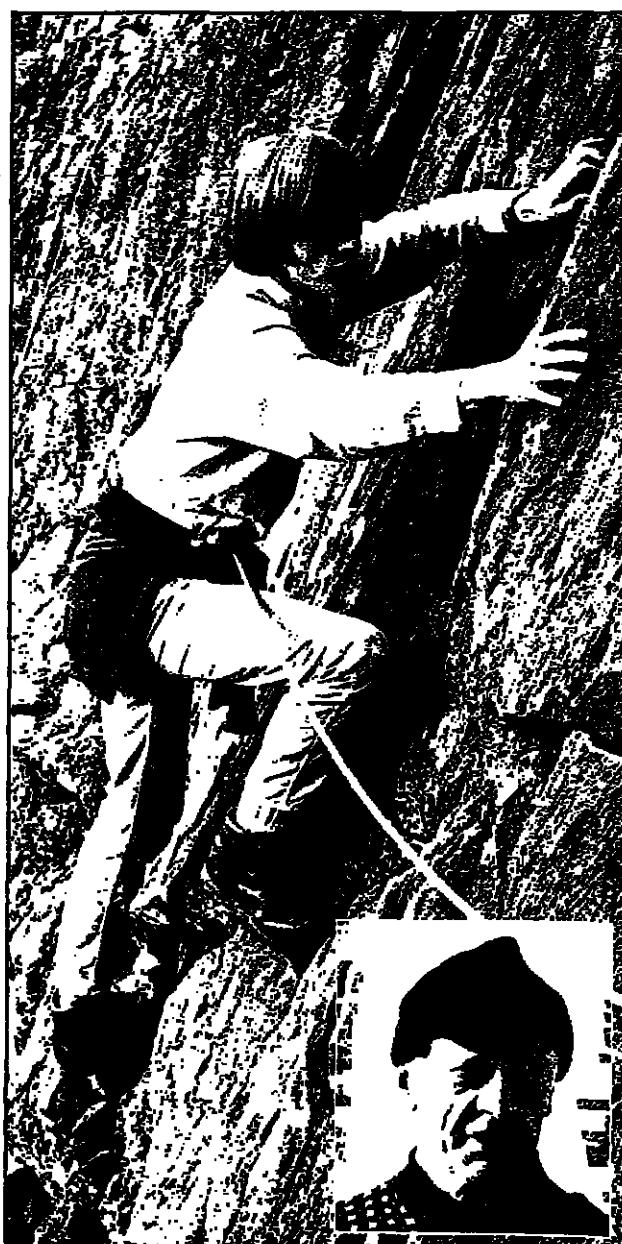
I was embarrassed when my tears started to flow. My tragedies happened almost 20 years ago. I feel I should be over them by now. But I found myself falling into old habits: listening to how far the survivors had fallen; wondering how they had managed to cheat death when so many others had perished. I thought of the Corrie Of The Soldier, a valley at the top of Cairn Toul in the Cairngorms, where a small cairn has been fashioned out of weatherbeaten stones, put there in memory of my father, Dr Claude Barry.

In July 1979 he set out to tackle Cairn Toul with three friends. Always dismissive of Munro-baggers, he referred scornfully to their efforts as "bargain basement Munros", meaning those who drive up the first 2,000ft and only walk the remainder. Cairn Toul, he reckoned, was "the real thing": over 4,000ft and accessible only through prolonged physical effort.

The group reached the summit and had started to come down when one climber noticed my father was missing. (He had a heart condition and the climb had proved too taxing.)

The friend told me afterwards he had called out: "Where's Claude?" then, minutes later, he heard a shout. "I ran back," he said. "I suddenly saw Claude seated somewhat oddly on a rock at the top, his head thrown back and one eye open. He was dead. I tried heart massage, but at that temperature a person chills very quickly. I suppose I knew then there was no hope. We put his body into a bivvy bag with a label on it indicating we had gone for help."

That was at lunchtime. I remember the cold, uncomfortable feeling I had when the mountain referred to on the news that evening was the one my father had been on. They said the climber wouldn't be named until relatives had been



Richard Barry (main photo) carried on climbing mountains despite the death of his father, Claude

informed and this can take hours. The group have to get to a phone. That done, they have to decide their best course of action and each give an account to the police of what happened.

Still - it is so hard to take in when it's your door the police come to. "It's Dr Barry," they said. "He's been found on Cairn Toul. He's dead." After the police came the journalists and their interminable questions.

I have always liked climbers. They are adventurous, passionate people, rarely irresponsible, not normally the type to climb Ben Nevis in gym shoes. They know mountaineering is a balancing act between risk and caution, between courage and daring and they know their survival depends on striking the right balance.

Lightning never strikes twice they say. But there were two climbers in my family - and it did. The second was Richard,

a brother I idolised - who was a year older than me, also a doctor. After we lost our father I asked him whether he would stop climbing. He smiled and said: "It won't happen to me."

I had only ever seen avalanches on television. I knew they involved a vast amount of snow - the sort that smashes heads against rocks and pins bodies relentlessly to cliff surfaces. I had also seen on television the commotion which follows one: police dogs hopefully picking up a lost climber's scent on the wind, the helicopter rescue men risking their lives in fiddish conditions, stretcher blankets and body bags. But the horror when it comes is far worse than any fleeting media image.

I will never forget 15 February 1982. It was, always will be, the blackest day of my life. I had such a strange feeling the night before. I knew my brother

hadn't returned to his flat. A friend who phoned tried to pacify me. "He's probably stopped for a meal... honestly, the chances are one in a million."

Next morning the mountains hit the headlines - in a big way, just like this week. Four climbers dead - three on Ben Nevis - a fourth body found in a corrie in Glencoe, a death caused by an avalanche on Am Bodach. No names until relatives had been informed. It sounded so very pat.

The fourth body was my brother's, yet the police car outside my house was the last thing I expected. I hope I never again have to experience the utter anguish which descended the minute I opened the door. That life-altering heart-stopping moment. I heard the mother of one of the young climbers killed this week put it so well: "You just know what they've come about."

Two policemen uttering those same words, all the more eerie a second time around: "It's Dr Barry - he's had an accident."

It was the only time in my life I have lost control. I was aware of myself screaming but it was as if this horror were happening to somebody else. The police had not even said what was wrong, but one of them shut the door while the other took me by the arm and told me Richard was dead. When they said he had fallen to his death 400ft down an icy rockface, I was glad of the comfort of their presence.

The journalists came out in full force this time. Seven of them arrived in taxis. Father and son, two doctors, both dying in the Scottish mountains - a great story! No words can describe that kind of intrusion and at such a desolate moment.

After a mountain death the family are so cut off from the nerve centre. All they can do is guess at what might have happened. I had so many questions which went round and round in my head: had he felt any pain? The police advised us against going to see Richard. His face was unrecognisable, they said. Yet I needed to say goodbye and will always regret my decision not to go. He was so special, my brother. Such an influence for good in my life. The truth is I miss him more now, not less, and all the clichés are true. It is so hard to accept a death when you haven't had a chance to say goodbye. I go back to Glencoe sometimes, to pay my respects.

It is an awesome place, of breathtaking beauty, desolate and wild. Not difficult to see why "Glencoe" translates as the Vale of Weeping.

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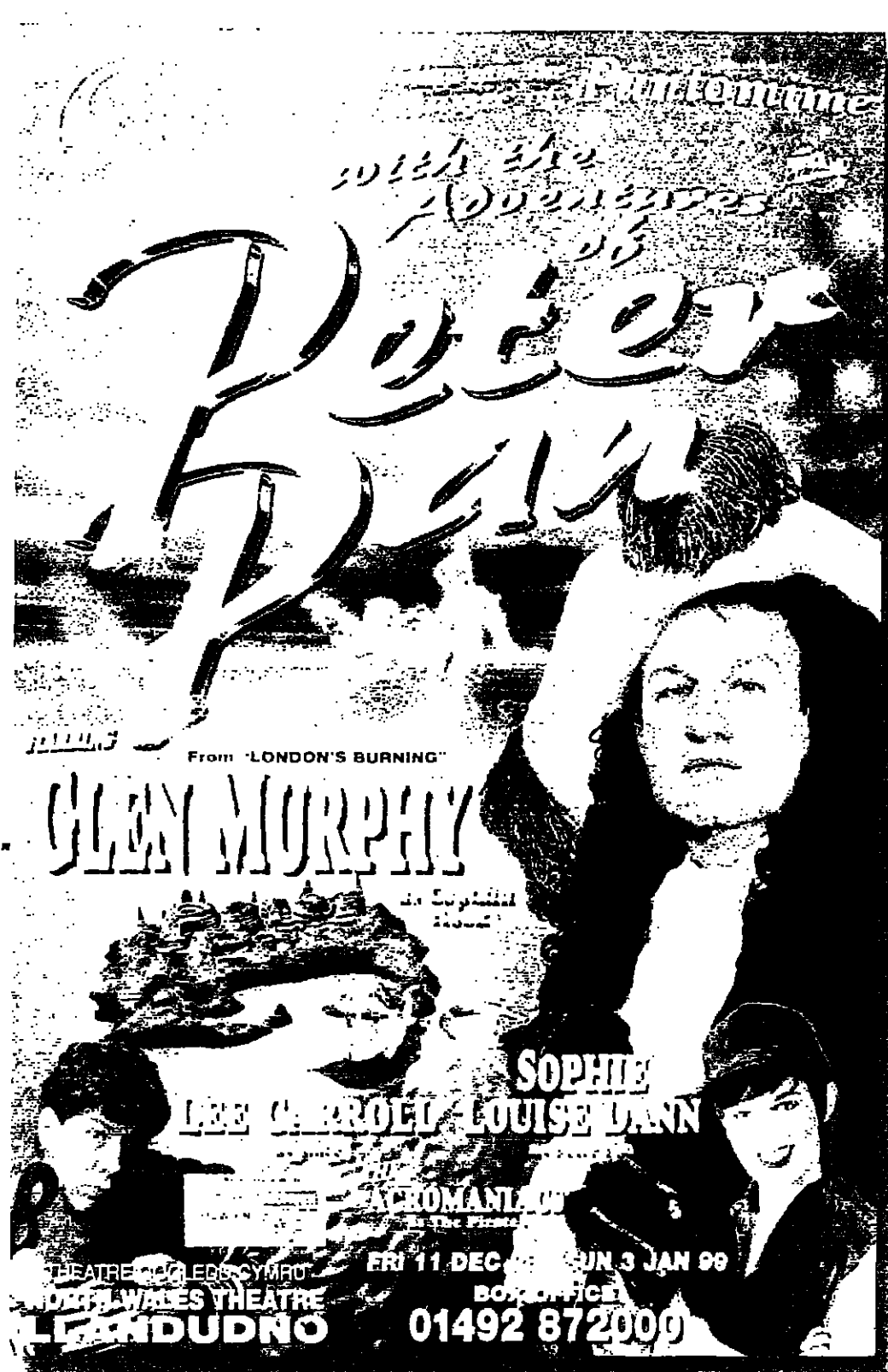
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They can't do that. Oh yes they can!



Welcome to a gripping tale about three wise men who've got Britain's panto industry all sewn up. By Meg Carter

You may not know the names, but Jon Conway, Paul Elliott and Nick Thomas are the kings of panto. Oh yes they are! This triumvirate wields the power to send Sonia to Aberdeen and the Grumbleweeds to Wolverhampton. They can make a *Gladiator's* Christmas. They sustain many a flagging TV career. And with a wave of their wand they produce around 30 of the country's 100 top pantomimes each year.

They joined forces to launch E&B/AMG Pantomimes 10 years ago, having spent the previous decade competing for the best venues and talent. Since then, they have doubled their share of the panto business and secured many of the "top" names for their shows. This year's line up includes Lesley Joseph's *Fairy Godmother* at Nottingham, Melinda Messenger's *Cinderella* at Swansea, Lionel Blair,

David Essex, and Postman Pat (appearing simultaneously in Belfast and Lewisham). It's a curious business with the traditions of men dressed as dames, leggy actresses playing principal boys, and "he's behind you" versus the sports personalities, soap stars and Top 40 songs. But with millions of potential ticket sales and box office already up seven per cent this year, pantomime is big business, and managing it is a year-round affair.

Work begins each December, a year ahead, Elliott explains. At this point the horse-trading begins as theatre managers haggle over which production goes where with what star, while stars attempt to bag their favourite venue. Inevitably, lots of celebrities want to stay near London, so venues within the M25 are easiest to cast. Where they actually end up comes down to where they were last year, who their co-stars will be and who has the greatest clout.

"It's like a huge jigsaw," he says. "We start out each year with plan A; by the time we reach plan P we've usually cracked it." Local tastes must be catered for. "Roy Hudd is wonderful in Plymouth but I don't think he'd work so well in Birmingham where people want something more in your face, like Brian Clegg." Cannon and Ball go down well up North, apparently. And the chances of seeing Lionel Blair in Belfast are slim.

Talent is selected to fulfil key audience expectations. "The enduring popularity of panto comes down to parents' confidence there's something in it for everyone," Thomas says. "Like all good Christmas puddings there's a set recipe: something fluffy for the kids, a comedian for the adults, 'legs' for the dads and old soap stars for the oldies." In other words: someone to laugh at, someone to fancy and someone you'd forgotten - hence the presence of Robin Askwith in Dartington, Brian Cant in Basingstoke and a Nolan in Torquay.

"It's about reassuring audiences," he adds. And, of course, raising a show's profile. Male soap stars are amongst the biggest draws this Christmas. Tickets are selling fast for Des Barnes from *Coronation Street*. And although Tiffany's accident is keeping last year's panto success story - Grant from *EastEnders* - in Albert Square this Christmas, Nick Cotton and Dirty Den are doing great business.

Dark Ages brought to light

A RECENT best-selling account of the medieval mind, written primarily to introduce North American readers to the enlightening force of the European Renaissance, repeats a stubborn prejudice against those composers working at the time of Leonardo and Michelangelo. "Music, still lost in the blurry mists of the Dark Ages, was a Renaissance lagard; the motets, psalms and Masses heard each Sabbath... fall dissonantly on the ears of those familiar with the soaring orchestral works which would captivate Europe in the centuries ahead, a reminder that in some respects one age will forever remain inscrutable to others." The view of popular history is clearly not reflected in the tastes of a near-capacity audience at St John's, Smith Square, there to hear a short, but exquisite programme of works long since retrieved

CLASSICAL TALLIS SCHOLARS VOCAL ENSEMBLE CHRISTMAS CONCERT ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE LONDON

from obscurity and presented unashamedly by the Tallis Scholars as timeless masterpieces. Peter Phillips, who established his vocal ensemble in Oxford in the early 1970s, has done more than any other performer to cut through the inscrutability of late medieval sacred music. He employs singers who have the technique and confident self-belief necessary to deliver apparently endless polyphonic lines without the safety wire of vibrato, their corporate intonation and blend as close to perfection as anything produced by an earthly choir. The Tallis Scholars' approach has drawn criticism from those, myself included, who find unrelenting tonal purity and the avoidance of openly passionate singing often at odds with aspects of the music itself. But there is a persuasive beauty in their work that captivates newcomers to early vocal music while setting aside purist arguments about matters of pitch or word-painting. It is precisely this pristine quality, whether on disc or in concert, that has helped narrow the perceived gap between "Dark Age dissonances" and more recent musical glories.

Thomas Tallis almost certainly crafted one of his most sublime works, the "Christmas Mass" *Puer natus est Nobis*, during the turbulent reign of Mary Tudor. It provided the substance in the first half of the Tallis Scholars' concert, prefaced by a flowing tenor-voice account of the chant of the same name and crafted to highlight the music's austere beauty. The tiniest moment of false production or a misplaced consonant here registered like a pop on a scratched record, one of the penalties of such disciplined singing but a magnificent guarantee of total concentration and a particular boon in the floated soprano delivery of the *Benedictus*.

The second half was given over to Marian music, with two works by continental composers framed by pieces from the insular pre-Reformation English tradition. Those in search of spiritual solace were well provided for here, especially so with Victoria's eight-part "Ave Maria" and the incredibly ornate, richly sonorous *Salve Regina* setting by William Cornysh. ANDREW STEWART

Ideas, ideals and ideologies

IDEOLOGIES OF one sort or another dominated last Monday night's all-Richard Strauss Barbiican concert by John Boydell's New Queen's Hall Orchestra, under Wym Morris. First, there was the Orchestra's nut-brown texture, facilitated by gut - or "wire-wound gut" - strings and turn-of-the-century brass and woodwind instruments. The general idea, as has often been stated, is to present a palatable - and authentic - alternative to the louder, harsher and less flexible profile paraded by modern-instrument orchestras. The choice of Wym Morris as Principal Conductor seems to me ideal, given Morris's obvious sympathy for interpretative "times past" and his penchant for broadly paced though inwardly emotive musical statements. In *Death and Transfiguration*, Morris coaxed some glowing string lines for the closing transfiguration section, though I would have welcomed even more of the *portamento* (expressive sliding from one note to the next) that has on other occasions proved such an attractive aspect of the Orchestra's playing style. Earlier on in the piece, Morris's obvious good intentions were thwarted by imprecise orchestral execution,

CLASSICAL RICHARD STRAUSS NEW QUEEN'S HALL ORCHESTRA BARBIKAN, LONDON

suspect wind tuning and a triumphal orchestral profile that suggests a fairly urgent need for extra rehearsal time. The finest orchestral items featured soprano Claire Rutter (replacing Margaret Price) in four songs Op 27 and the celebrated *Four Last Songs* of 1948. Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine a more haunting account of the post-Wagnerian orchestral preface to *Ruhe, meine Seele*. *Morgen* enjoyed some delicious solo violin work from concert-master Robert Gibbs and a trance-like projection of the text from Rutter, especially the line "Mute, we shall look into each other's eyes," while the ethereally trilling winds that hover around the closing pages of "Im Abendrot" brought the concert to an atmospheric close. The other "ideological" slant in the programme, Strauss's elegiac *Metamorphosen* for 23 solo strings. Earlier in the evening, in a controversial but fascinating pre-concert lec-



Wym Morris: a penchant for broadly paced statements

ture, Matthew Boydell (John's son) conjectured how this most profound of Strauss's works might be seen, in some respects, as a memorial to the doomed Führer. Boydell's claims that Strauss was pro-National Socialist, and that his "collaboration" was prompted more by ideology than material interest, will not have pleased everyone. Morris directed an intensely voiced reading of the score, and while certain inner parts were ill-defined, much of the solo playing was extraordinarily expressive. The orchestral layout had violins to the left, violas centre-stage and cellos and basses on the right, and the plan worked well. *Metamorphosen* can, on occasion, sound like an extended whinge, but here its contrapuntal workings and contemplative mood were effectively realised. The concert had opened with the adorable *Capriccio* sextet that also opens Strauss's last opera, and that too could be said to be a good example of the musical enterprise - though, when it comes to the orchestral execution, an extra spot of cleaning and tightening would not come amiss. ROB COWAN

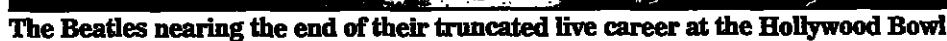
IN SATURDAY'S WEEKEND REVIEW



Magnus Mills joins 'The Independent'
The Booker and Whitbread Prize shortlisted author begins his new radio column on tomorrow's Arts page

Britain's live music scene isn't what it used to be. Why? Bands don't serve their time on stage like they used to. A government task force is reporting on the problem next week. But is it too late? By Alex Webb

Andrew Roachford, whose eponymous group has built its following on extensive gigging, put it like this: "You can practise and practise and practise but you have to go and actually be in a committed situation in order to perfect your craft." Ian Croal has promoted for more than 20 years at Manchester's Band on the Wall. "It's difficult to prove, but I'm sure it affects how people play. Every musician knows there's nothing like the real thing, and if the best musicians are not getting opportunities to perform, the highest quality levels are going to drop."



Redferns

fundamentally wrong with the economics of live music. At the top end - big halls and stadium gigs - touring now relies heavily on sponsorship or record company support. And at the other end, things are no better: "I now dread the idea of getting a band together to go out on the road," admits Ashley Slater, leader of a funk/dance act Freakpower. "I know that tracking down gigs is

gether business plans which make no sense whatsoever – and getting lottery grants on that basis, creating municipal white elephants.” Clearly the need is for support and subsidy which do not damage the fragile ecology of the live scene – which suggests that effective remedies will be local and incremental, and use existing promoters’ expertise.

Live music is something that many support in the abstract, like

Live music is something that many support in the abstract, like eating broccoli or paying taxes. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has already registered one major political success on behalf of the music industry – creating a package for musicians as part of the Government's New Deal. How complimentary it would be if on 11 January the submissions of Mick Hucknall *et al* resulted in some improvement in conditions for the promoters and musicians who feed the industry with talent – and what an effective retaliation of the charge of industry short-termism that would be.

MARTIN NEWELL

The Old Guard

They grew long hair for your sort
Kids. Pahl! What do you know?
In a flared de-denimed heaven
Does age begin to show
As She puts on Cat Stevens
And He puts on The Who?
They can't stand all the new stuff
They go with Radio 2
And it's all got far too frantic
Since the beat went up a gear
They remember buying Stairway
But do not shed a tear

Salute the new Top Hundred
 Goodbye to the old guard
 Who cares what Radio 1 says
 They've *always* tried too hard?
 One stop behind the fashions
 And strictly anodyne
 We eschewed it in the old days
 For Radio Caroline
 And songs we took as anthems
 Which our parents called a noise
 Gave expert figures vigour
 And knighthoods to the boys
 Remastered but redundant
 Our album tracks and singles
 The *cris-de-cœur* of mopheads
 Are advertising jingles

We rejoin them on the dancefloor
At an age when we should slow down
For a heart-attack watusi
At some tragic Sixties hoedown
The thing about pop classics is
They won't bear carbon-dating
Give it two decades my dears
Your cardigans are waiting.

In a parallel universe, The Pretty Things are bigger than the Stones. But the (not quite so famous) band isn't bitter. By Pierre Perrone

The new album, 'Rage Before Beauty' is released in February.



LIVE

NEW ORDER
MANCHESTER ARENA

reunion is really about; the exorcism of old ghosts. In reinterpreting the past into the sound of their present, New Order are finally able to move forward.

From "Ceremony" to "True Faith" and from "Blue Monday" to "Bizarre Love Triangle", each track is deconstructed to its electronic bones and then rebuilt around a new model. One which owes as much to alternative rock as it does acid house, but with an ear for the bombastic needs

of the stadium-sized event. The comeback gig is often like a TV soap. Each time an old character returns to the Square we cheer a little. Secretly however we'd all hoped for a final, tragic departure. With this gig New Order could have finally done a Tiffany and departed in blaze of glory. However with such a wealth of new ideas on display it seems New Order are more likely to get back on the bus than end up under its wheels.

MARTIN JAMES

MARTIN JAMES

NEW FILMS

THE ACID HOUSE (18)

Director: Paul McGuigan

Starring: Stephen McCole, Ewen Bremner
A trio of interrelated shorts culled from the stories of Irvine Welsh, which are played out in the down-and-dirty landscape of inner-city Edinburgh. Director Paul McGuigan turns *The Acid House* into a triumph, adapting his style well to the shifting landscape of Welsh's tales. **West End:** Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End.

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG)

Director: Jonathan Frakes

Starring: Patrick Stewart
In the latest instalment in the sci-fi series, Patrick Stewart's go-gooding captain tangles with F Murray Abraham, who's hatched a scheme to take over an Eden-like planet of perpetual youth. *Insurrection* takes no risks with the Star Trek format; it navel-gazes for a while, gives floorspace to the regulars and lides its way along to the climax. **West End:** ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero.

SITCOM (18)

Director: François Ozon

Starring: Evyline Dandry, François Marthouret
A scattergun satire on middle-class mores, which takes abundant pleasure in dismantling a standard nuclear family (*mère, père, fils et fille*). The result is sharp, funny and savage one moment, over-heated and indulgent the next. **West End:** Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Virgin Chelsea.

Xan Brooks

GENERAL RELEASE

THE APPLE (SIB) (PG)

Seventeen-year-old Samira Makhmalbaf's precocious debut stages a true-life recreation of the fortunes of Iran's Naderi sisters. **West End:** Metro, Renoir.

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)

The follow-up to *Babe* tosses the hapless "sheep pig" into the midst of the city where he becomes the unlikely saviour of a bunch of assorted walls. **West End:** Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero.

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15)

Will Smith's fall-guy DA teams up with Gene Hackman's pensioned-off Pentagon warhorse to probe a political cover-up. **West End:** ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Hammersmith Virgin, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Screen on the Green, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road.

THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG)

This gaudy swashbuckler gallops full-speed through 18th-century California in the company of Antonio Banderas' authentically Hispanic do-gooder. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road.

THE MIGHTY (PG)

Peter Chelsom's *The Mighty* treads through familiar coming-of-age country with its tale of two outcast kids in Cincinnati. **West End:** Screen on the Hill, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket.

THE NEGOTIATOR (15)

Samuel L Jackson and Kevin Spacey go head to head in a thrilling drama. **West End:** UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End.

OUT OF SIGHT (15)

George Clooney plays the law-breaking hero as a down-and-dirty version of Cary Grant, and turns in the best performance of his career so far. **West End:** Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Phoenix Cinema, Rio Cinema, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero.

THE PARENT TRAP (PG)

Lindsay Lohan stars as the separated-at-birth twin sisters (one British, one American) who are trying to get their parents (Natalia Richardson and Dennis Quaid) back together. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea.

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U)

In planning his cartoon life of Moses, DreamWorks honcho Jeffrey Katzenberg envisaged it "painted by Claude Monet and photographed by David Lean". The end result winds up as *The Ten Commandments* by way of Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat. **West End:** ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero.

RUSH HOUR (15)

Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker's star in this hit-and-miss thriller. **West End:** Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End.

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15)

Robin Williams simmers as the dead chappie who goes to a cod-impressionist heaven before jetting southward to rescue his suicide bride. **West End:** ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End.

CINEMA
WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET (0870-902 0418) @ Baker Street
The Prince of Egypt 1.40pm, 4pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm What Dreams May Come 6.05pm, 8.35pm

ABC PANTON STREET (0870-902 0404) @ Piccadilly Circus
Elizabeth 2.10pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm My Name Is Joe 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ABC PICCADILLY (0171-287 4322) (from 1pm) @ Piccadilly Circus
Hamlet: The Prince of Denmark 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm There's Something About Mary 1.05pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ABC SHAFESBURY AVENUE (0870-902 0402) @ Leicester Square/Tottenham Court Road
Chainsaw Massacre 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 8.55pm What Dreams May Come 1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE (0870-902 0403) @ Leicester Square/Piccadilly Circus
Buffalo 3.40pm, 8.40pm The End 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm The Governess 1.30pm, 3.55pm, 6.15pm, 8.35pm It's a Wonderful Life 1.05pm, 6.05pm La Vie Reveille des Anges 1.15pm, 3.35pm, 5.55pm, 8.15pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD (0870-902 0414) @ Tottenham Court Road
Antz 4.45pm, 9.45pm Enemy of the State 1.05pm, 3.45pm, 6.25pm, 9.10pm The Prince of Egypt 2pm, 7.55pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.50pm, 9.35pm

BARBICAN SCREEN (0171-638 8891) @ Barbican The Mighty 6.15pm, 8.40pm Sitcom 6.15pm, 8.40pm

CHELSEA CINEMA (0171-351 3742) @ Sloane Square
On Conspit la Chanson 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.35pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE (0171-498 3323) @ Clapham Common
Enemy of the State 6.20pm, 9pm The Mask of Zorro 1.15pm, 4pm The Parent Trap 3.45pm The Prince of Egypt 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm What Dreams May Come 6.45pm, 9.15pm

CURZON MAYFAIR (0171-369 1720) @ Green Park
Dancing at Lughnasa 4.15pm, 9pm The Philadelphia Story 6.30pm

CURZON SOHO (0171-734 2255) (12pm-6pm) @ Leicester Square/Tottenham Court Road
Casablanca 4.15pm, 9pm Elizabeth 6.30pm The Mighty 6.15pm, 8.15pm My Name Is Joe 9.15pm Sitcom 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm

ELPHANT AND CASTLE CORONET (0171-703 4968) @ Elephant & Castle
The Prince of Egypt 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.35pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQUARE (0990-888990) @ Leicester Square
Out of Sight 12.10pm, 2.55pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm, 11.20pm The Prince of Egypt 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm, 11pm Star Trek: Insurrection 11pm, 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm, 11.40pm

GATE NOTTING HILL (0171-727 4043) @ Notting Hill Gate
The Add House 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.50pm, 11.30pm

HAMMERSMITH VIRGIN (0870-907 0718) @ Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith
Enemy of the State 3pm, 6pm, 9.10pm The Parent Trap 12noon The Prince of Egypt 12noon, 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm Rush Hour 8.40pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm

ICA CINEMA (0171-930 3647) @ Charing Cross
Sea/Life in LA 5pm, 7pm, 9pm

METRO (0171-734 1506) @ Piccadilly Circus/Leicester Square
The Apple (Sib) 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm The Boys 4.15pm, 8.45pm Fire 2pm, 6.30pm

NOTTING HILL CORONET (0171-727 6705) @ Notting Hill Gate
Enemy of the State 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN (0870-050007) @ Camden Town
The Add House 2.05pm, 4.20pm, 6.35pm, 8.55pm, 11.10pm Babe: Pig in the City 12.05pm Enemy of the State 12.05pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm, 11.15pm Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas 1.30pm The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 8.35pm The Parent Trap 12.10pm The Prince of Egypt 1.45pm, 1.55pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.25pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm, 11.25pm What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm, 11.25pm

ODEON HAYMARKET (0870-050007) @ Piccadilly Circus
What Dreams May Come 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6.05pm, 8.40pm

ODEON KENSINGTON (0870-050007) @ High Street
Kensington Babe: Pig in the City 12.10pm Enemy of the State 12.05pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm, 11.15pm Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas 1.30pm The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 8.35pm The Parent Trap 12.10pm The Prince of Egypt 1.45pm, 1.55pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.25pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm, 11.25pm What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm, 11.25pm

ODEON MARBLE ARCH (0870-050007) @ Marble Arch
Enemy of the State 12noon, 3.05pm, 6.05pm, 9.05pm, 12.05pm The Mask of Zorro 1.20pm, 2.50pm, 5.55pm, 9.05pm, 12.05pm The Parent Trap 12.15pm, 3.15pm The Prince of Egypt 11.55am, 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 6.45pm Rush Hour 1pm, 11.40pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1pm, 3.35pm, 6.10pm, 8.55pm, 11.35pm What Dreams May Come 6pm, 8.50pm, 11.45pm

ODEON MEZZANINE (0870-050007) @ Leicester Square
Elizabeth 12.35pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm

Les Misérables 3.30pm, 8.30pm
Mulan 1.40pm, 3.50pm Ronin 5.55pm, 8.25pm Snake Eyes 1.05pm, 6pm There's Something About Mary 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE (0870-050007) @ Swiss Cottage
Babe: Pig in the City 12.10pm Enemy of the State 12.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm The Mask of Zorro 1.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm Out of Sight 8.25pm The Parent Trap 1.15pm The Prince of Egypt 1pm, 3.25pm, 5.55pm Rush Hour 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm Star Trek: Insurrection 12.45pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm What Dreams May Come 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm

ODEON WEST END (0870-050007) @ Leicester Square
Enemy of the State 12.05pm, 3.20pm, 5.30pm, 6.15pm, 8.25pm, 9.10pm The Parent Trap 12.05pm, 2.45pm

PEPSI IMAX CINEMA (0171-494 4153) @ Piccadilly Circus
Elizabeth 2.40pm, 4.45pm, 7pm, 9.05pm T-Rex Back to the Precambrian (3-D) 1.35pm, 3.40pm, 5.45pm, 8pm, 10.05pm

PHOENIX CINEMA (0181-444 6789) @ East Finchley
Elizabeth 6.15pm Left Luggage 4pm Out of Sight 8.55pm

PLAZA (0990-888990) @ Piccadilly Circus
The Add House 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 9pm Babe: Pig in the City 12.10pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm The Parent Trap 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm Saving Private Ryan 7.50pm The Truman Show 3.35pm, 8.40pm

RENOIR (0171-837 8402) @ Russell Square
The Apple (Sib) 1pm, 2.55pm, 4.30pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm On Conspit la Chanson 3.45pm The Philadelphia Story 1.25pm, 6.15pm

RIO CINEMA (0171-254 5677) @ Dalston
Kingdom Elizabeth 6.15pm Live Flesh 4pm Out of Sight 8.45pm

RITZY CINEMA (0171-733 2259) @ BRV @ Brickton
The Add House 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm, 11.45pm Enemy of the State 3.05pm, 6.15pm, 8.50pm, 11.25pm The Mask of Zorro 3pm, 6pm Out of Sight 9pm, 11.30pm The Prince of Egypt 3.30pm, 6.40pm Rush Hour 8.45pm, 11.20pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.15pm, 7pm, 9.20pm, 11.35pm

SCREEN ON BAKER STREET (0171-935 2772) @ Baker Street
Enemy of the State 2.40pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm Left Luggage 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9pm

SCREEN ON THE GREEN (0171-726 3520) @ Angel/Highbury & St John's
Enemy of the State 2.40pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm

SCREEN ON THE HILL (0171-435 3366) @ Melbury Park Left Luggage 4.40pm The Midget 2.40pm, 6.50pm, 9pm

UCI WHITELEYS (0870-603 4567) @ Queensway Antz 12.50pm, 2.50pm Babe: Pig in the City 1.10pm, 3.30pm Enemy of the State 12.40pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm, 8.50pm, 9.20pm The Mask of Zorro 1.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9.15pm The Negotiator phone for details Out of Sight phone for details The Parent Trap phone for details The Prince of Egypt phone for details Rush Hour 5.10pm, 7.30pm, 9.50pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.40pm, 2.10pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm, 9.40pm What Dreams May Come 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm

VIRGIN CHELSEA (0870-907 0710) @ Sloane Square/South Kensington
Antz 12.45pm Enemy of the State 2.15pm, 5pm, 8.45pm Out of Sight 2.45pm, 6pm The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.15pm Sitcom 2.30pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9.30pm What Dreams May Come 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD (0870-907 0711) @ South Kensington
The Add House 1.10pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.50pm, 11.30pm The Mask of Zorro 1.20pm, 3.10pm, 6pm, 9.20pm The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3.10pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm The Mighty 1pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm The Prince of Egypt 12.20pm, 3.10pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1pm, 3.30pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm

VIRGIN HAYMARKET (0870-907 0712) @ Piccadilly Circus
The Add House 2.40pm, 5.25pm, 8.10pm (+ Short: Jump Boy) The Mighty 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm My Name Is Joe 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.45pm

VIRGIN TROCADERO (0870-907 0716) @ Piccadilly Circus
Antz 12.20pm, 2.10pm, 4.05pm, 6.10pm Babe: Pig in the City 12noon, 2pm The Negotiator 8.30pm Out of Sight 5.40pm, 8.30pm The Prince of Egypt 12.05pm, 3.20pm, 5.50pm, 8.15pm The Mask of Zorro 1.20pm, 3.10pm, 6pm, 9.20pm Star Trek: Insurrection 12noon, 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 7pm, 9.15pm The Truman Show 12.10pm, 3.10pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm What Dreams May Come 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 6pm, 8.50pm

WARNER VILLAGE WEST END (0171-437 4343) @ Leicester Square
The Add House 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.30pm, 12midnight Blade 4.10pm, 7pm, 9.35pm, 12.10pm The Prince of Egypt 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm, 11.10pm Lethal Weapon 4.12.30pm, 3.30pm, 6pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm, 11.10pm The Parent Trap 12.45pm The Negotiator 2.40pm, 5.40pm, 8.40pm, 11.55pm A Perfect Murder 3.40pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm, 11.45pm Rush Hour 3.55pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm, 11.30pm What Dreams May Come 1.50pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm, 11.45pm, 12.20pm, 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 9.20pm, 11pm, 11.50pm

CINEMA
LONDON LOCALS

BECKENHAM (0870 9020412) BR Beckenham
Junction Babe: Pig in the City 12.10pm Enemy of the State 6.30pm, 9.20pm The Parent Trap 3.35pm The Prince of Egypt 12.10pm, 2.25pm, 4.40pm Star Trek: Insurrection 12.05pm, 2.30pm, 4.55pm, 7.20pm, 9.45pm What Dreams May Come 6.55pm, 9.30pm

BROMLEY (0870 050007) BR Bromley
North Enemy of the State 12.20pm, 3.15pm, 6.10pm, 9.15pm The Mask of Zorro 3.10pm, 6.20pm, 9.20pm The Parent Trap 12.20pm The Prince of Egypt 1.15pm, 4.50pm Rush Hour 6.45pm, 9.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.35pm, 9.25pm

CATFORD (0181-698 3306) BR Catford
Babe: Pig in the City 1.15pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.40pm What Dreams May Come 5.45pm, 8.30pm

EALING (0870 9020413) BR Ealing
Virgin Unbridge Road (0870-9070719) BR/ @ Ealing Broadway
Enemy of the State 6pm, 8.40pm The Mask of Zorro 6.30pm The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.20pm The Prince of Egypt 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm Star Trek: Insurrection 12.45pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.45pm

NORTH FINCHLEY (0181-446 9344) @ East Finchley/Finchley Central
Antz 4.10pm, 7pm Babe: Pig in the City 10.50am Enemy of the State 2.45pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm, 12midnight The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 6.25pm, 9.20pm The Negotiator 9.25pm The Parent Trap 2.30pm, 6.30pm The Prince of Egypt 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.40pm Rush Hour 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm, 11.40pm Star Trek: Insurrection 4pm, 6.40pm, 9pm, 11.30pm What Dreams May Come 3.20pm, 6.50pm, 9.35pm, 12.10am

GREENWICH (0181-293 0101) BR Greenwich
Elizabeth 1.15pm Enemy of the State 3.20pm, 6.05pm, 8.50pm, 11.35pm The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 6.15pm, 9pm The Parent Trap 1pm The Prince of Egypt 12.45pm Rush Hour 11.45pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.30pm, 7.15pm, 9.30pm, 11.50pm

HAMPSTEAD (0870-9020413) @ Belsize Park
Enemy of the State 2.55pm, 8.10pm The Parent Trap 2.20pm The Prince of Egypt 1.25pm, 3.45pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm What Dreams May Come 6pm, 8.30pm

HARROW (0181-426 0630) @ Harrow on the Hill/Harrow & Wealdstone
Antz 4.15pm, 7.30pm, 10.45pm The Soldier (Asian Film) 1pm, 4.15pm

WARNER VILLAGE (0181-427 9009) @ Harrow on the Hill Antz 5.50pm, 7.50pm Babe: Pig in the City 3.30pm Enemy of the State 3pm, 3.50pm, 6pm, 6.40pm, 9pm 9.25pm, 11.45pm The Mask of Zorro 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.30pm, 11.25pm The Parent Trap 4.10pm, 6.55pm The Prince of Egypt 2.05pm, 4.35pm, 6.50pm, 9.15pm Rush Hour 2.15pm, 4.45pm, 7.05pm, 9.35pm, 10pm, 11.55pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 11.15pm What Dreams May Come 4pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm, 11.40pm

MUSWELL HILL (0870 050007) @ Highgate
Enemy of the State 2.50pm, 5.45pm, 8.25pm The Mask of Zorro 5.15pm, 8.15pm The Parent Trap 12.15pm The Prince of Egypt 12.50pm, 3pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.40pm, 1.50pm, 4.15pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm

PECKHAM (0181-235 3006) BR Peckham
Rye Antz 1.50pm Babe: Pig in the City 12.20pm, 5.20pm, 8.20pm Enemy of the State 12.35pm, 3.20pm, 6.05pm, 8.50pm, 11.35pm Lost in Space 11.50am The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 6.15pm, 9pm The Mighty 1.35pm, 4.10pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm, 11.15pm The Parent Trap 11.45am, 2.10pm The Player's Club 11.55pm The Prince of Egypt 2.35pm Rush Hour 2.45pm, 5pm, 7.15pm, 9.30pm, 11.45pm Small Soldiers 4.45pm Star Trek: Insurrection 4.40pm, 7.05pm, 9.20pm, 11.40pm What Dreams May Come 4.35pm, 7pm, 9.25pm

PURLEY (0870-9020407) BR Purley
Babe: Pig in the City 12.05pm Enemy of the State 4.55pm, 8pm The Parent Trap 2.20pm Star Trek: Insurrection 12.55pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm What Dreams May Come 5.50pm, 8.20pm

ROMFORD (0870-9020419) BR Romford
Babe: Pig in the City 12.30pm The Mask of Zorro 5.20pm The Parent Trap 2.40pm The Prince of Egypt 12.55pm, 3.30pm Star Trek: Insurrection 1.20pm, 3.45pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm What Dreams May Come 5.40pm, 8.20pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (0870 050007) BR Romford Antz 12.30pm Babe: Pig in the City 1.30pm, 4pm 6.30pm Enemy of the State 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm The Mask of Zorro 2.45pm, 6pm, 8.50pm The Mighty 9.10pm Milan 12.45pm Out of Sight 9pm The Parent Trap 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.30pm The Prince of Egypt 12.40pm, 3pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm Rush Hour 2.15pm, 4.40pm, 7pm, 9.20pm Small Soldiers 1pm Star Trek: Insurrection 12.15pm, 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm What Dreams May Come 2.10pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9.15pm

SIDCUP (0541-555131) BR Sidcup
Babe: Pig in the City 1.15pm The Prince of Egypt 1pm, 3.20pm Star Trek: Insurrection 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.40pm What Dreams May Come 5.45pm, 8.30pm

SURREY QUAYS (0990 88

NEW YEAR'S DAY RADIO

RADIO 1 (97.8-99.8MHz FM)
6.00 Gilles Peterson. 8.00 Emma B. 11.00 Chris Moyles. 3.00 Scott Mills. 6.00 Pete Tong's Essential Selection. 9.00 Westwood's Hip Hop Anthems. 2.00 Fabio and Grooverider. 4.00 - 7.00 Emma B.

RADIO 2 (88.0-90.2MHz FM)
6.00 Mo Dutta. 8.05 Sarah Kennedy. 10.00 Richard Allinson. 12.30 The Huddines Songbook. 1.00 Eric Clapton: Bluesbreaker. 2.00 Alex Leiser. 5.00 Des Lynam. 7.00 Neil Diamond in Conversation with Paul Gambaccini. 8.00 Ainsley Harriott's New Year Feast. 9.30 Listen to the Band: A Review of 1998. 10.00 Radio 2 Young Musician 1998 Showcase. 11.00 Lynn Parsons. 12.00 Lynn Parsons. 4.0 - 6.0 Lata Sharma.

RADIO 3 (90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.35 The New Year's Day Concert. See *Pick of the Day*. 10.50 Naked Beauties. See *Pick of the Day*. 11.35 Concert, part 2. 12.35 Telemann. 12.50 The Harmonic Series. 1.00 The R3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 3.50 The Harmonic Series. 4.00 Mozart Voices. 4.45 Music to Die For. 5.00 A Medieval Christmas. 5.30 Music Rooms. 6.00 Discovering Music with Leonard Slatkin. 7.00 Cabaret Cocktails. 7.30 Performance on 3. Another chance to hear nine of the most memorable concerts of the 1998 BBC Proms season at the Royal Albert Hall, London. 8. In Prom 60, given on 3 September, featured one of the great world orchestras with Mahler's *Planetary* symphony and a major new work by Birtwistle commissioned for Chicago. It is based on the idea of discontinuous time and takes the moment just before midnight as a point of departure into a new world. Chicago SO/Daniel Barenboim. Birtwistle: *Exodus*. Mahler: *Symphonic No 5* in C sharp minor. (R)

RADIO 4 (92.4-94.6MHz FM)
6.00 Today. 9.00 NEWS: Desert Island Discs. 9.45 Serial: Peter Pan and Wendy. 10.00 NEWS: Woman's Hour. 11.00 NEWS: Summer Pastures. See *Pick of the Day*. 11.30 The Oldest Member.

PICK OF THE DAY

THIS YEAR'S New Year's Day Concert (10.15am R3), with its traditional mix of waltzes and polkas, is interrupted by the first of a pair of features on the Cuban cigar - *Naked Beauties* (10.50am R3, right). Andrew Jefford travels to Cuba to see cigars being made and to talk to connoisseurs about the joys of being addicted to a carcinogenic weed; and, I'm afraid, they fail to keep Monica Lewinsky



Where Three Roads Meet. Written and directed by Don Taylor. Peter has a problem, a personal crisis which he has not shared with anyone. But he is a Church of England vicar, and the time has come for him to share his problem with his Bishop and with his wife. With Michael N Harbour, Karen Archer, Peter Jeffrey, Robin Sebastian and Frances Jeater. (R)

9.20 Postscript. Peter Holland talks to ten Shakespeare experts about the Bard today. 5. 'Global Shakespeare'. Terence Hawkes and Arima Lombard discuss the role of Shakespeare - and particularly 'The Tempest' - in the postcolonial world. 9.40 Yevgeni Kissin. Another chance to hear Yevgeni Kissin's phenomenal first solo recital at the 1997 BBC Proms, staged in the arena at the Royal Albert Hall, London. Kissin is an extraordinary young Russian pianist who attracts the attention and praise usually reserved for the sturdiest virtuosos of the past - like Liszt and Chopin themselves. Haydn: *Sonata in E flat, H XVI 52*. Liszt: *Liebestraum No 12* in C sharp minor. Chopin: *Two Nocturnes*. Op 27. Piano *Sonata No 3* in B minor. Op 58. Plus encores by Chopin, Liszt, Schubert and Beethoven. (R) 11.30 The Harmonic Series. 11.30 And His Mother Called Him Bill. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Bizet. (R) 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night. **RADIO 4** (92.4-94.6MHz FM)
6.00 Today. 9.00 NEWS: Desert Island Discs. 9.45 Serial: Peter Pan and Wendy. 10.00 NEWS: Woman's Hour. 11.00 NEWS: Summer Pastures. See *Pick of the Day*. 11.30 The Oldest Member.

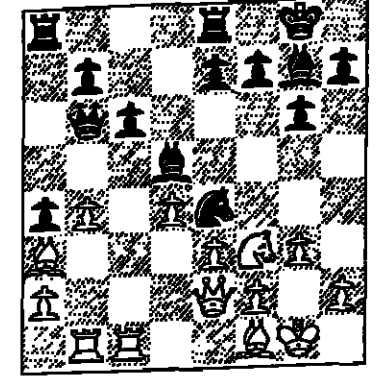
12.00 NEWS: You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Screen Test. 2.00 NEWS: The Archers. 2.15 Afternoon Play: Open Secrets. 3.00 NEWS: Making History. 3.30 Radio: Ten Poems about Sound. (R) 3.45 Lullaby for an Insomniac Princess. 4.00 NEWS: Open Book. 4.30 The Message. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 News Quiz of the Year. 7.00 NEWS: The Archers. 7.15 Front Row. 'Seamus Heaney: Opened Ground'. The Nobel Prize-winning poet talks to Mark Lawson, and reads his earliest and most recent poems. 7.45 Under One Roof. Concluding the second of three five-part dramatisations from the Michelo Hanson stories, with Janet Maw, Edna Dore and Luisa Bradshaw-White. 8.00 NEWS: Our Next Question Please? Jonathan Dimbleby looks back on a year in which the term 'foreign affairs' took on a new meaning. Northern Ireland took a decisive step in its history, and 'Any Questions?' celebrated its fiftieth birthday. 8.45 Letter from America. Alistair Cooke with another slice of Americana. 9.00 NEWS: The Friday Play:

Radio 5 Live (693, 909kHz MW)
6.00 Proops Hoops. (R) 6.30 Breakfast. 9.00 Brian Hayes. 12.00 The Midday News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 3.00 The Scottish Premier League. 5.00 Drives. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 Alan Green's Sportsnight. Alan Green kicks off the football new year with a lively debate among sporting guests. 9.00 Park Life. Mark O'Donnell discovers how Ron Noddes runs Brentford Football Club. 10.00 Late Night Live. Insight and comment on the day's big issues with Brian Hayes. Including Pappertalk. 10.30 Sport. 11.00 News. 11.15 The Financial World Tonight. 1.00 Up All Night. 4.00 Extra Time. (R) 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports. **Classic FM** (100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 The Smooth Classics Hang-over Cure. 8.00 Nick Bailey's Easter Breakfast. 10.00 Dr Mark Porter's New Year Workout. 12.00 Requests. 2.00 Classic Classics Hang-over Cure. 3.00 Michael Mappin. 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. 9.00 Evening Concert. 11.00 Alan Mann. 2.00 Classic Classics Recitals. 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths. **VIRGIN RADIO** (1215, 1197-1204kHz MW 1058MHz FM)
6.00 Richard Allen. 10.00 Russ Williams. 2.00 Nick Abbot. 6.00 Wheels of Steel. 10.00 Mark Forrest. 2.00 - 6.00 Paul Coyte. **WORLD SERVICE RADIO** (198kHz LW)
1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Small World. 1.45 Short Story. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 People and Politics. 3.00 World News. 3.05 World Business Report. 3.30 Sports Roundup. 3.30 Science in Action. 4.00 Newsdesk. 4.30 Weekend. 5.00 Newsday. 5.30 Outlook. 5.55 - 6.00 Spotlight. **TALK RADIO** (198kHz LW)
6.00 Russell Grant's New Year Breakfast. 9.00 Kate Lloyd. 12.00 An Audience with Barry Manilow. 1.00 The Sports Zone. 8.00 An Audience with Tony Bennett. 9.00 Mike Allen. 2.00 - 8.00 Mike Dickin.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN



AFTER TWO rounds of the Hastings Premier, Russian Sergei Shipov was already the sole leader with 2/2 after beating me in the first round and an even harsher victory against Tony Miles in the second. First my defeat - I can only hope that I generally play better in the New Year. Sergei Shipov (Black), Jon Speelman (White to play). Since Black has the positional threat of ...Nd6, I really had to play 21.b5.

21.b5 cxb5 22.Rxb5 Qe6 23.Bg2 Rec8 24.Ng5 Rxc1+ 25.Bxc1 Qc6 26.Bxe4 Qxc1+ 27.Kg2 Bc4 28.Rc5 Bxe2 29.Rxc1 Rb8 30.Rc2 Ba5 31.Rc7 Bf6 32.Nf3 Kf8 33.Rc5 b6 34.Rc7 Bb5 35.Ne1? e5 36.Nf3 exd4 37.Nxd4 Bxd4

38.exd4 Rd8 39.d5 Rd7 40.Rc8+ Ke7 41.Ra8 Kd6 42.Bc2 Bc4 43.Rxa4 b5 44.Ra3 Bxd5+ 45.Kf1 Bc4+ 46.Ke1 Kc5 47.g4 Kb4 48.Rh3 Bxa2 49.Rxd7 Rd4 50.Bd1 Be6 51.h4 Kc3 52.h5 gxf5 53.gxf5 Rh4 54.Bf5 b4 0-1

Sergei Shipov v Tony Miles Hastings 1998 (2nd round) Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 e3 e6 5 Bxc4 c5 6 0-0 a6 7 Bb3 b7 8 e4 cxd4 9 e5 Nd7 10 Qxd4 Bb7 11 Qf4 Nc5 12 Ne3 Nxb3

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

EAST FOUND himself in a position where he had three possible lines of defence on this deal. He rejected the first as obviously wrong, and the second because it was surely too dangerous. Unfortunately the third worked badly as well when declarer judged matters well. Only later did it become clear that East should not have been so hasty with his analysis. South opened Two Clubs (showing an Acol Two in any of the four suits but not game-forcing) and North relayed with Two Diamonds. East overcalled with Two Hearts. South showed his spades, and West contested with Three Hearts. After a spade raise from his partner, South went on to game. All passed and West led the ace and another heart against Four Spades. East took his king and switched to his trump. After winning the spade return in hand, declarer led his singleton diamond to the two, jack and queen. This left East on lead with a problem. A diamond return would clearly cost a trick and there was an acute danger in trying a club for if, as seemed likely, South held the queen as well as the ace, he would now avoid a club loser. Taking a deep breath, East tried a third round of hearts, deliberately conceding a ruff and discard. All

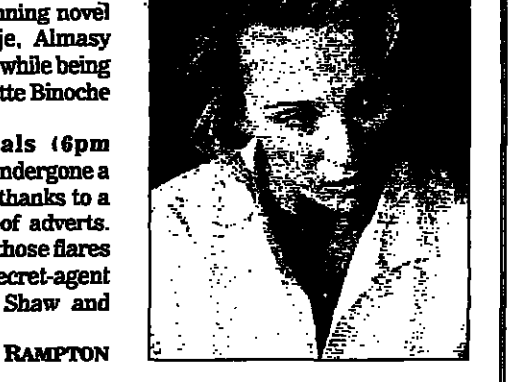
East-West game; dealer South	
North	
♠ J 3 2	
♥ 6 4	
♦ K J 8 7 6	
♣ J 7 5	
West	East
♥ 7 6 5	♦ 4
♠ A 5 3 2	♥ K J 10 9 8
♦ 10 5 2	♠ A Q 9 3
♣ 10 6 3	♥ K 4 2
	South
	♠ A K Q 10 9 8
	♥ Q 7
	♦ 4
	♣ A Q 9 8

would have been well if declarer had ruffed in dummy but he wisely trumped in hand and discarded a club from the table. Now 4J gave an entry for a successful club finesse and 2A and a club ruff followed to give South 11 tricks. And the spurned possibility? The ace of diamonds (or, for that matter, even a low diamond) certainly gives declarer a trick in the suit but does not really help him for he still has an inescapable club loser. Would you have found this defence?

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

IT MAY lose some of its visual grandeur on the small screen, but Anthony Minghella's multi-Oscar-winning romance *The English Patient* (10pm Sky Premier) is still well worth catching. Ralph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas (right) shine as Count Lazzaro Almásy and Katherine Clifton, the pair who embark on an illicit affair in the Sahara Desert just before the Second World War. In the complex plot, adapted from



the Booker Prize-winning novel by Michael Ondaatje, Almásy reflects on the liaison while being tended by nurse Juliette Binoche a few years later.

SKY PREMIER
6.00 A Change of Heart (1997) (7397). 8.00 The Incredible Journey (1963) (26382). 10.00 The Wilkies (1990) (2604). 12.00 A Change of Heart (1997) (7397). 2.00 The Incredible Journey (1963) (26382). 4.00 Jaws (1975) (1081). 6.00 The Wilkies (1990) (2604). 8.00 Force Majeure (1977) (5749). 10.00 The English Patient (1998) (8546397). See *Pick of the Day*. 12.30 Daboluque (1996) (30844). 2.30 Rough Magic (1995) (594378). 4.35-6.00 Jitters (1997) (87553).

SKY MOVIE MAX
6.00 Vanishing Point (1997) (50446). 7.30 Blue Rodeo (1998) (33772). 9.00 Explorers (1985) (16248). 11.00 Godzilla vs Gigan (1972) (73052). 1.00 Blue Rodeo (1998) (33772). 3.00 Explorers (1985) (16248). 5.00 Vanishing Point (1997) (50446). 7.30 UK Top Ten (1993). 8.00 Action Heroes (1998) (8546397). 10.00 Movie Magic (1995). 9.00 Shadow Conspiracy (1997) (4397401). 10.45 Hidden Agenda (1990) (367740). 12.35 The Package (1999) (100229). 2.35 The Package (1999) (100229). 4.05 Material Instincts (1995) (505337). 5.40 - 7.30 Godzilla vs Gigan (1972) (73052).

SKY CINEMA
6.00 Champion (1949) (637888). 8.00 The Pink Panther (1963) (7759401). 8.00 The Pink Panther (1963) (7759401). 10.00 Madigan (1989) (845286). 11.45 Che (1969) (294888). 1.25 Damien - Omen II (1979) (698280). 3.45 Hollywood Hall of Fame (1992). 5.45 The Yellow Canary (1944) (522523). 8.20 Close.

FILMSTOCK
6.00 A Room with a View (1986) (754057). 8.00 Blue Juice (1995) (784542). 10.00 Bitter Moon (1992) (790197). 12.20 Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994) (120420). 2.45 What's Eating Gilbert Grape? (1994) (805437). 4.30 - 6.00 Gregory's Girl (1981) (44557).

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
12.00 Rex Hunt's Fishing Adventures (1997). 4.30 Walter Wolf (1997). 6.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 8.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 10.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 12.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 2.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 4.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 6.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 8.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 10.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 12.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 2.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 4.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 6.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 8.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 10.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 12.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 2.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 4.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 6.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 8.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 10.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 12.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995). 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